A LETTER

FROM

A Clergy-Man in the Country,

TO

The Clergy-Man in the City,

Author of a late Letter to his Friend in the Country:

SHEWING

The Insufficiency of his Reasons therein contained for Not Reading the

DECLARATION.

By a Minister of the Church of England.

LICENSED, *Aug.* 15. 1688.

In the Savoy: Printed by *Edw. Jones*; and Published by *Randal Taylor* near Stationers-Hall. 1688.

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
IN MEMORY OF
LIONEL DE JERSEY HARVARD
CLASS OF 1915
Feb. 24, 1926

TO
My Brethren of the Clergy
IN THE
COUNTRY.

SIRS,

WHat I here present you, is written with an hearty desire to serve you: How you will accept it, I know not. I have been by some suspected, and by others called Papist, *for nothing but now and then talking what is contained in this Book; which when you read, you will find just so impertinently, as you all of the* Loyal Clergy *were called so heretofore, when you offered to speak but a word in Vindication of the Rights and Prerogative of* CHARLES the Second, *against the Popular Misprisions of those Days.*

It is not the Religion, *but the Kings late* Declaration *is the Subject of this Discourse. When the Order came first out, and was read in the* Gazettes, *I was frequently in the Company of divers Clergy-Men; and once with a great concourse of them, happening just about that time to be met together on a Publick Occasion. The thing was talked, but no Man that I heard made any scruple of Reading it, as we were commanded. But soon after, we were attacked with a Letter from a Clergy-Man of the City, which of a sudden enlightned our Understandings, and let us see how dull our Country Apprehensions were. Alas! till then we*

could espy nothing in it, against our Consciences, against our Oaths, against the Laws both of God and Man, and to the utter and unavoidable Ruine of our Church. I was somewhat ashamed for my self, and the rest of my Country-Brethren, that we should all Balk this same Sugne of the City-Divine. This made me cast my Eye over the Declaration again, with a survey also of his Letter: The result of my Thoughts on both is contained in these following Sheets. That Loyalty towards my King, which from my Childhood I sucked in, and from the Breasts of our Mother the Church of England, and which, I think, can never be eradicated in me, has made me wonder at this, which seems to me Levity of so many of the Clergy in this Matter. Our first Thoughts, were very sudden; Let us stay a little, and consider with our second Thoughts. If I have herein done any thing which may be serviceable to you for that purpose, I think I have served God and my King withal, and am

Your Loving Brother.

A LETTER FROM A Clergy-Man in the Country, TO The Clergy-Man in the City,

Author of a late Letter to his Friend in the Country:

SHEWING

The Insufficiency of his Reasons therein contained for not Reading the *Declaration*.

SIR,

I Shall as freely and as friendly communicate my Thoughts to you concerning the Matter and Attempt of your Letter, as you have professed to do the same to your Friend in the beginning of it, and for the same Reason you add, namely,

That this is not a time to be reserved.

Though with respect to His Majesty and His Affairs of State, perhaps there never was more Reason and Prudence of our being reserved in this Juncture:

Yet with reſpect to this Attempt, in which you would engage the whole Clergy with your unhappy Self, and communicate your Contagion in the City to us of the Country, it is otherwiſe. Like the dumb Son of *Cræſus*, this would make a Son of the Church of *England* now ſpeak, who never ſpake before; to ſee that fatal Stab, which, by this Letter, and Diſcourſes of this kind, is aim'd at the very Heart of his Mother, and that Doctrine by which ſhe would ſignalize Her ſelf among other Chriſtian Churches, owning Her King next and immediately under God, in all Matters Eccleſiaſtical as well as Civil, Her Supreme Head and Governor.

You have, Sir, in this your Letter, as an unnatural Member, riſen up againſt your Head, charged your Dread Sovereign with the breach of the Laws both of God and Man: You have rendred Him a Perſon not fit to be truſted; a Perſon deceitful, and deſigning the Ruine at the ſame time of thoſe He has promiſed to protect and maintain: You have kicked againſt His Sacred Authority and Power, to which God has commanded every Soul, on pain of Damnation, to be ſubject; and you have attempted to draw the whole Clergy into the ſame Diſobedience and Damnation with your ſelf; and that in an Inſtance ſo trifling, as makes us at once the Wonder and Deriſion of ſuch Foreign Ambaſſadors as are now reſident in the Engliſh Court, whoſe report to their Maſters of ſuch an unprecedented Inſolence in us, will alarm all other Princes to a watchful Jealouſie over Men of our Order throughout the Chriſtian World.

As for the moſt Reverend the Archbiſhop, and the Right Reverend the Biſhops concerned with him in this Matter: The fear and doubt, the haſte and ſurprize, the Induſtry and Vigilancy of a Party diſcontented, and ſubtile to ſtep in, and for their Intereſt to blow the Coals of this Conteſt; then the Clamours and Threats of a Popular Faction, the falſe Friends, the inceſſant Sollicitations, giving them reſt neither Day nor Night; the crafty laying hold of a new Matter aliene from the firſt, *viz. The Defence of their Peirage*, &c. may excuſe *à tanto*, our Reverend Fathers, who unhappily fell under theſe Temptations: And much more the recoil, which I have heard is ſince upon the Conſciences of ſome of them, for what has fallen out on this occaſion contrary to their Expectations.

But as for you, and the reſt of us to whom you direct your Letter, being under no ſuch Temptations, and having more Time and Repoſe, and none of thoſe Impediments of adviſing better with our ſelves and our Friends; and the after Wiſdom alſo of reflecting upon the Evils which have already enſued, and the many others like to ſpring out of this Root; I think our more prudent, charitable and Chriſtian Courſe, ſhould now have been, and I am credibly informed it is the advice of the Biſhops themſelves, inſtead of further inflaming, to caſt Water upon this Fire, which is ſo unhappily kindled between us and our Gracious King.

None of them have yet publiſhed in Print any thing of their Manage and Conduct of this Buſineſs againſt the King, and I hope never will, how much ſoever they are ſollicited to do it; They had rather, as it ſeems, not have been neceſſitated to own, what was produced in Court, as their Addreſs or Petition

to

to His Majeſty in this Matter; and I believe do give their Bleſſings rather to thoſe Sons who cover, than expoſe, their Fathers Nakedneſs.

Wherefore I have ſome cauſe to think, you are no Advocate of their imploying; you are of too hot a Head, and too much on the Lath, to be theirs or our Charioter at this time: It is eaſily ſeen, whither you would drive us.

If you are, as you pretend your ſelf, a Son of that Church, an unſpotted Loyalty has hitherto been accounted Her indeleble Character: I am ſorry to find ſo little of it in your Letter; you have by it outdone the ſubtilty and cruelty of all Her Enemies.

Never was ſo deadly a ſtroke given, nor ſo natural and effectual to Her Ruine, as, that which you commend to us for the only method of ſaving Her.

I am charitably minded you have done this nevertheleſs of a good Intent, crowded along with the zealous Hurry of a Popular Miſtake: And the rather, becauſe I ſee your Letter makes a better ending than a beginning; and that notwithſtanding your poſitiveneſs all the way, you are not ſo ſatisfied in your own Reaſonings, but you relent at laſt into that good Nature and Temper, which for your Honour, I will Remark in your own Words, thus:

This, Sir, is our Caſe in ſhort; the difficulties are great on both Sides; and therefore now, if ever, we ought to Beſiege Heaven, with our Prayers, for Wiſdom, Counſel and Courage, &c.

To clear then the difficulties, which you acknowledge in this Caſe, I ſhall apply my ſelf, touching upon the moſt material parts of your Letter.

Our Enemies, (you ſay) *who have given our Gracious King this Council againſt us, have taken the moſt effectual way, not only to Ruine us, but to make us appear the Inſtruments of our own Ruine, that what courſe ſoever we take we ſhall be undone, and one ſide or other will conclude, we have undone our Selves and fall like Fools.*

By our Enemies, I conceive, you can mean no other than the Kings Friends, whom I believe no further our Enemies, than what amounts to a bare *Se Defendendo.*

Where they meet us in oppoſition to what neceſſarily conduces to the preſervation of Themſelves, their Lives, their Fortunes, you muſt not blame them but the common inſtinct of Nature, that they are ſo far our Enemies.

In all other Caſes, they are our Friends, beyond our Expectations, Enemies ſhort, I am ſure, of our Fears, and of what was heretofore in publick Print, our own Character and Proſpect of a Popiſh Succeſſor.

As for the Free and Undiſturbed Exerciſe of our Religion, our Churches, our Revenues, our Dignities, we enjoy them all: And we have further the Kings Gracious Offer, of whatſoever other Aſſurances we can excogitate againſt our Fears and Jealouſies, leſt they ſhould not continue.

I know no cauſe of this great Out-cry againſt the King and His Friends, on account, that they are our Enemies, nor where we are hurt, unleſs by the holding our Hands, from flying at one anothers Throats.

We are enabled by theſe Laws, ſo ſoon as we may, to let looſe our too prurient Rage, one upon the other, but eſpecially upon the Kings Friends, whom we, I think, therefore call our Enemies.

We can hardly forbear already and aloud, to foretell what muſt become of them afterwards; what Gibbets and Axes, and Confiſcations are provided for them; for His Majeſties Commiſſioners, Judges, Military Officers, Papiſts in Maſcarade and out of Maſcarade, and whoever elſe have not dared to deny their Obedience to His Majeſties Moral Commands, or to leave him Solitary and Deſtitute of Servants to Guard and Attend him,

What elſe means this our ſo tenacious ſticking to theſe Undoing and Sanguinary Laws? And how pitifully are the Claws hid of ſuch, as pretend them to be the only poſſible expedient of their own Security?

Now to repreſs the violent and blind Zeal of ſuch Men, for the Eſtabliſhed Laws, without abatement or allowance of any thing to the Viciſſitude, which the Providence of God has made among us, from a Proteſtant, to a Prince of the Catholick Communion, is, I aſſure my ſelf, all His Majeſty deſigns by His Endeavor to get our good Will, toward the remove of the Teſt and Penal Laws.

And if I thought any Clergy of the Church of *England*, or other of that Communion, compliant with the King in this his charitable undertaking, ſhould ſuffer in the leaſt Hair of his Head, or loſe by it any the leaſt Liberty becoming a Chriſtian to own in ſuch a Juncture, I ſhould not have opened my Mouth to have been an Advocate in this Cauſe.

And whoſoever thinks otherwiſe, if he conſider, he will find he cannot do it, without Reflection of moſt vile ill Names upon his Majeſties Honour, and Blaſpheming the Sacredneſs of his Royal Promiſe.

So that, Sir, I think, you might have ſpared His Majeſties Friends and His Council, and have allowed them a milder Character, than *our Enemies, and ſuch as ſeek our Ruine*; by that Name expoſing them in the very Head of your Letter, to the Rage and *Odium* of the People; who are ſo far from being Enemies to us, that themſelves are the Perſons in diſtreſs and danger from us.

And having now a time to Speak, do requeſt of us, without any injury to our ſelves, that we will pleaſe to remove no other but thoſe Laws, to which not only their Fortunes, but their Lives lay every Hour Obnoxious, and only for ſerving God according to their Conſciences, and their King at his Command, according to their natural Allegiance.

But theſe Enemies of ours, ſince you will have them ſo, you note further, and to our greater misfortune, to be of that baſe and ignoble kind, as having us in their Claws, they muſt divert themſelves a little in Play with us, as the Cat does with the Mouſe, before they devour us, our Gracious King the while looking on; and ſo comes in the buſineſs of the Declaration.

The Reading of which in our Churches and Chapels, you intimate to be contrived as it were for nothing in the World but to make our Enemies Sport: For the main work of our Undoing you account is over, and the trick of this Declaration no other, *Than while themſelves are the Authors, to make us appear nevertheleſs the Inſtruments of our own Ruine.*

In good earneſt, Sir, and is this the likelieſt reaſon you could Excogitate? Had you but a little of what St. *Paul* tells us, *thinketh no evil*, that would have ſuggeſted to you ſome more charitable account of His Majeſties, together with his Councils proceeds in this Affair.

If

If you had not been ſo haſty, as to take what lay uppermoſt in a Mind poſſeſt with Paſſion and Prejudice, you might have thought of that His Majeſty Himſelf publiſhes in the front of His Declaration, in theſe words:

" Our Conduct has been ſuch in all times, as ought to have perſwaded the " World, that We are firm and conſtant to Our Reſolutions: Yet that eaſie " People may not be abuſed by the Malice of crafty wicked Men, We think " fit to declare, That Our Intentions are not changed ſince the Fourth of *April* " 1687. when We iſſued out Our Declaration for Liberty of Conſcience.

How the eaſie People have been wrought upon ſince that time, to leſſen their Opinion of His Majeſties Sincerity in that Declaration, is too notorious.

And what Inſinuations of the daily progreſs and advance towards the inthralling them under the Yoak of Popery and Arbitrary Power, nevertheleſs for the Kings Promiſe and Declaration of Liberty, and all this not only from the Preſs, but many of the Pulpits too.

To obviate which Malice of theſe crafty wicked Men, His Majeſty, with His Conncil, have thought expedient, to iterate his Declaration, and to extend the Publication of it to all Churches and Chapels, which was omitted before, becauſe His Majeſty never imagined to have met with ſo much of it among the Men of Churches and Chapels, as ſince He hath found.

This has made it at length neceſſary, by the Reading of it in Churches and Chapels, to undeceive the eaſie People there alſo.

Now, Sir, why may not this Account ſatisfie you, which appears ſo rational and probable, without rai'ing up the Old Cry of Forty One, againſt the King and His Evil Council, and expoſing His Miniſters of State on every ſlight Occaſion? And why ſhould you affright your ſelf and your Readers, with ſo many falſe Alarms of *Enemies*, of *Ruine*, of *falling*, of *unavoidable undoing what courſe ſoever we take*; and require us to give more Credit to your melancholy Dreams, than to the Honour and Integrity of His Majeſty, and the open Declaration of His innocent Meaning?

After which, I do agree with you, that ſhould we chuſe to take our fall here, and die of mere conceit, we do leave a ſhrewd Temptation upon ſome to conclude as you ſay, *That we have undone our ſelves, and die like Fools.*

It ſeems though in the next Paragraph, you have found a more honourable and comfortable way of falling, as ſuppoſe *for refuſing to read Maſs, or to ſwear to the Trent Creed.*

I agree with you in this, but wonder then, that you, who can ſee ſo well, and approve the better, and are ſo confident it is not far off, ſhould undertake to perſwade the Church of *England* to fall before-hand with you, and to die with a *Deteriora ſequor* over her Tomb, for her Epitaph.

But this of falling for refuſing to read Maſs, you ſay, *is not our preſent caſe.*

No, nor ever ſhall be in future, if His Majeſty may be believed, and His Meaſures taken and complied with by our ſelves.

You ſhall never have the Honour, Sir, to fall ſo in His Reign, nor in any to follow, if His Declaration be ſuffered to take the effect.

But one thing there is by the way, which I cannot paſs over without Remark; which is,

That

That though this Declaration have two Strings, and tuned harmoniously one to the other, yet quite through this your Letter you can never be made to ſtrike both together.

One is, His Majeſties Deſire of our Compliance with Him for taking off the Teſt and Penal Laws.

The other is, His Declaration in the firſt place, "That he will Protect and "Maintain our Archbiſhops, Biſhops, and Clergy, and all other His Subjects "of the Church of *England*, in the free exerciſe of their Religion as by Law "eſtabliſhed, and in the quiet and full enjoyment of all their Poſſeſſions, with-"out any Moleſtation or Diſturbance whatſoever.

Now upon one of theſe Strings you are perpetually harping, *viz.* The taking off the Penal Laws and Teſt; and that makes no Muſick alone, without the other, to a Church of *England* Ear, be it of the Nobility, Gentry or Clergy.

It is certain, it would undo the Church of *England* to have her Teſt and Penal Laws taken away by a Parliamentary Law, without any Proviſion made by a like Parliamentary Law to ſecure the keeping what ſhe has beſide, and what the King has promis'd ſhall remain inviolate.

This His Majeſty offers, and ſhould be always ſuppoſed along with the other: But that is the String you cannot be made to touch; and you are not without a Reaſon for it, for then you had anſwered your Letter your ſelf, and that had ſtopped the Mouth of all your popular, but falſly and temerariouſly inferred, Conſequences.

That to take away the Teſt and Penal Laws at this time, is but one ſtep from introducing of Popery; and therefore to read ſuch a Declaration in our Churches, though it do not immediately bring Popery in, yet it ſets open our Church-Doors for it, and THEN it will take time to enter, and THEN the People will hate us and deſpiſe us, and THEN we may be eaſily cruſhed, and THEN we fall without pity.

All theſe *THENS* hang upon the ſame String, and are but begg'd Conſequences. However, I perceive you are ſo confident of your Skill in linking a Chain of Conſequences, and hanging them on the Thread of a Spiders Web, that you are reſolved not to ſtay for the fulfilling of your Propheſie of Deſtruction to the Church of *England*, by the introducing of Maſs, *Trent* and Popery; but ſeeing it comes all to one, even as good fall now, it is but a little the ſooner, by not reading the Declaration.

For this perſecuting Declaration does threaten us, that if we hold but our Hands from knocking His Majeſties Friends on the Head with our Penal Laws, then in the firſt place, "He will Protect and Maintain our Archbiſhops, Bi-"ſhops, and Clergy, and all other His Majeſties Subjects of the Church of "*England*, in the free exerciſe of our Religion as by Law eſtabliſhed, and in "the quiet and full enjoyment of all our Poſſeſſions, without any Moleſtation "or Diſturbance whatſoever.

So that the Matter is plain, What ſhould we live for any longer? But even die Martyrs with all the ſpeed we can, leſt if this Declaration ſhould take effect, we never have opportunity to do it more. *Let us ſuffer all that can be ſuffered,* ſay you, *in this World, rather than contribute to the final Ruine of the beſt Church in the World, by reading ſuch a Declaration as this.*

But

But I think it is good first, as you say in the next Paragraph, *to stay a little, and examine the Matter impartially, as those which have no mind either to ruine themselves, or to ruine the Church.*

And that you may lay your Foundation sure, you begin with a conjectural and precarious Supposition.

I suppose (say you) *no Minister of the Church of* England *can give his Consent to the Declaration*: And with this *Postulatum* away you run to prove, Then he cannot read it.

That this is a *Non Suppomendum*, you see in the experience and event of the thing, some both Bishops and Ministers of the Church of *England*, do Consent and Read it, and I doubt not but many more will, if His Majesty think fit, Well, and what Fault have they committed? None at all, your self being Judge. For you say,

Pag. 4. *Reading the Declaration would be no Fault at all, but our Duty, when the King Commands it, did we approve of the matter of it.*

So then, with those who can approve of the matter of it and Read, we have nothing to do here; they are acquitted by your self; and they prove more, it seems, than you supposed, and if there be any Fault, it must remain to be on the part of those, who do not Consent nor Read.

Nevertheless, the Basis or Ground-work, on which you Rear the whole Superstructure of your Letter, is a supposition, That no Minister of the Church of *England*, can give his Consent to the Declaration.

What! Not to a thing in which, if there be any Fault, it is of his own making? Is our thinking some one way, some the other, enough to turn the Scale so, as what were otherwise no fault at all, becomes presently contrary to the Laws of God, and Laws of the Land, as you say afterward?

Point to that matter of the Declaration, which cannot be approved by a Minister of the Church of *England*, on account, of its being contrary to, or prohibited by, the Laws of God.

This indeed *would make it matter of Conscience*; which to render it the more odious, you here and there slily suggest, without offering at the least manner of Proof, for you know well enough there is none. His Majesty by this His Declaration, requires us to signifie to His People, a method, which in this juncture he Judges most expedient to be taken, for the securing the Crown and the Persons of our Kings, from those apparent Dangers, to which they have been frequently exposed by our Dissentions in matters of Religion, and for the common Peace and Good of all His Subjects.

Some approve it, and some do not, according as their Humour, their Interest, or their Parts serve, and as ordinarily Mens Censures pass on other Affairs of State.

But so to Reprobate it as a *Malum in se*, as a Pest to the Publick, as an Abomination and Prophanation of our Churches, and not fit to be heard by Christian Ears, is such a hard straining of the case, as brings along with it, the very dregs of Passion and Party.

We cannot approve of the matter of it, you say; it may be so, Men do not always disapprove or deny their Consent to what is proposed, because it is

evil,

evil, but becauſe they have no mind to it, and ſo the conſequence will be, applying it to the matter in Hand: That the Authority of His Majeſty, over a Miniſter of the Church of *England*, does not to extend ſo far, as to injoyn him to Read the Declaration, when he has no mind to it: For, I doubt, there is with a great many, more of Stomach in the refuſal, than Conſcience; but this not to appear above board.

One thing though I perceive you have a great mind to, which is, that we would grant you your ſuppoſition, before you prove it, namely,

That no Miniſter of the Church of *England*, can give Conſent to the Declaration, and then let you alone to make good your Inference, that he cannot Read it.

Now, Sir, I do not think you have us ſo much upon the Hanck as you imagine, ſhould I grant your Suppoſition.

But I ſee you care not, whither we do or no, for you preſently fall hot upon the Work, to prove the Concluſion; *Ergo*, He cannot Read, for that is interpretative Conſent.

Now for my part I confeſs to you, I turn over the Leaf, knowing how many ſoever your Arguments be to prove it, they would not ſatisfie me, nor I think any reaſonable Man, till he ſee firſt how well bottom'd your Hypotheſis be, from which you borrow your Inference.

I would fain ſee your Reaſons firſt: Why a Miniſter of the Church of *England* cannot Conſent, before I grant what you are ſo haſty to ſuppoſe.

Why, that I ſhall by and by, but you will prove firſt, That Reading is Conſenting, Reading is Teaching, which is as odd an *Hyſteron Proteron*, as Hanging and Trying afterwards.

Let Reading be Conſenting or not Conſenting, without troubling your ſelf, till I hear whether I may Conſent or Not.

Wherefore I muſt beg your Favour, to let me depart from your method, and turn over two or three Pages further, to examine your Reaſons wherefore we cannot Conſent.

1. Your firſt is, That *it is againſt the Conſtitution of the Church of* England, *which is eſtabliſhed by Law, and to which I have ſubſcribed; and therefore am bound to teach nothing contrary to it, ſo long as this Obligation laſts.*

The Conſtitution of the Church of *England*, as it is now a Proteſtant Church, diſtinct from what it was before, conſiſts in various Acts of Parliament, made eſpecially in the beginning of the Reformation: But I know of no Subſcriptions required of the Clergy to ſuch Acts of Parliament.

There is a Book intituled, *Conſtitutions and Canons Eccleſiaſtical, Treated upon by the Biſhop of* London, &c. *Anno Domini* 1603. Which Conſtitutions and Canons Eccleſiaſtical are in Number CXLI. Theſe I think you muſt mean, by your ſaying, *to which you have ſubſcribed.*

But you have not pleaſed to tell us againſt which of them it is we offend, by Reading the Kings Declaratiou: So that this Argument does nothing but lead us into a Wood, and there leave us to be loſt.

Is there any Conſtitution or Canon Eccleſiaſtical which bars the King from extending Clemency even to His Diſſenting Subjects, where He ſees a reaſonable

able and honourable Occaſion for it: Much leſs where the Neceſſity of His Affairs drive Him to it, His Honour, His Conſcience, the Preſervation of Himſelf and His Friends, and the common Peace of all; I dare truſt King *JAMES* the Firſt for that, without troubling my ſelf to look over all the Hundred and Forty One Canons. He had more King-craft, than to part with ſuch a Jewel out of the Crown, to adorn the Croſier of the Church of *England*.

The Conſtitution you mention here, is to what you have ſubſcribed, you ſay. By the 36 Canon, Subſcription is required, not to the whole Book, but only to three Articles in that Canon mentioned.

By the firſt, We acknowledge the Kings Supremacy. By the ſecond, The lawful uſe of the Common-Prayer. By the third, An Allowance is made of the 39 Articles. Upon any of which I cannot imagine how you ground your Reaſon, wherefore we cannot conſent to the Declaration, unleſs you had told us. If you were to prove the contrary from theſe Conſtitutions, there ſeems to be ſomething accommodate for your purpoſe in the firſt and ſecond Canons.

All Archbiſhops, Biſhops, &c. are obliged by the firſt, to keep and obſerve all and ſingular the Laws made for reſtoring to the Crown of this Kingdom, the Antient Juriſdiction over the State Eccleſiaſtical.

Which Antient Juriſdiction in the Second Canon is reſembled to the ſame Authority in Cauſes Eccleſiaſtical, which the godly Kings had among the Jews and Chriſtian Emperors of the Primitive Church.

Now if the Parallel run ſo high as to the Antient Juriſdiction of this Crown, how Antient does it mean? Certainly before any pretence of the Invaſion of it by the Biſhop of *Rome*. Wherefore that being a Work too big for a Letter, I will give but one or two Inſtances, and thoſe ſo far back, as to be out of ſuſpicion of any ſuch Foreign Invaſion.

The Government or Juriſdiction of this Crown, if inherent in it, was, and of right ought to be, the ſame in Matters of Religion, as well while that of our Princes and their Subjects was Pagan, as afterwards when it became Chriſtian. Let us ſee then the Tranſition from the one Religion to the other in the Reigns of *Lucius* the Firſt *Britiſh*, and *Ethelbert* the Firſt Chriſtian King of the *Saxons*. We find that in both, our Kings acted without any controul of Laws, as well in the relinquiſhing the long-eſtabliſhed Pagan, as in the reception of the Chriſtian Religion. And as our Kings were free, ſo they kept their Subjects free from the Coaction of Laws in that Matter.

Particularly Venerable *Beda* relates of *Ethelbert*, That having embraced the Chriſtian Religion, he could not but caſt ſome more benign Aſpect on ſuch as were Converts with himſelf. Yet ſo, *Ut nullum cogeret ad Chriſtianiſmum*, That there ſhould be no Force upon the Conſciences of his Subjects. *Didicerat enim à doctoribus, auctoribuſque ſuæ ſalutis, ſervitium Chriſti voluntarium non coactitium debere eſſe*. For that he had been taught of thoſe who were the Authors of his Salvation, That the Service of Chriſt ought to be voluntary, and not of compulſion. *Bed. Hiſtor. Eccleſ. ex Verſione Abrahami Woodlock.*

The Antient Juriſdiction of this Crown, you may ſee by this, was at that time free; and whatever Laws were before eſtabliſhed in favour of the Pagan

Superſtition, and Perſecution of Chriſtians, theſe Princes diſpenſed with them of their own Supreme Power, next and immediately under God, and ſo became Inſtruments of introducing the Bleſſed Means of Salvation, and tranſmitting them to us their Poſterity: Which otherwiſe perhaps had not been ſo eaſily effected by a National or Parliamentary Concurrence at preſent. But this Subject has been laboured, by many great and learned in the Laws of this Realm, to whom it eſpecially belongs, and to whom I refer thoſe who deſire further ſatisfaction.

This Antient Juriſdiction of the Crown, the Second Canon meaſures by that which was claimed and exerciſed of the godly Kings of *Judah*, and Chriſtian Emperors of the Primitive Church. How uncontrouled of any they exerciſed that Power who were Kings of *Judah*, let their Hiſtory in the Holy Scriptures teach you.

As for the Ancient Chriſtian Emperors, that they iſſued out Laws Eccleſiaſtical by their Imperial Edicts, and made Revocation of thoſe Edicts as they pleaſed, I think no Body will deny. I know there was all the way of the Primitive Chriſtianity, another Spiritual Juriſdiction over Souls, and even over the Emperors themſelves, as they were Sons of the Church, for their Edification, but no way intrenching on the Temporal Power even in Cauſes Eccleſiaſtical, proper to ſuch a Power: When ever it made any attempt that way, it was always checked by Chriſtian Princes. And is it to be believed that this Canon, which was made, with all the ſingular Laws and Statutes there mentioned for the aboliſhing all Foreign Power repugnant to the ſame, would not have been as ſharp upon any upſtart Power at Home, and of His Majeſties own Subjects repugnant to the ſame, if they had been aware of any the leaſt tendency then to ſuch an Inſolence? Take an Inſtance in one of the moſt famous and firſt Emperor of the Chriſtian Church, *Conſtantine* the Great; and let us ſee what kind of Authority in Cauſes Eccleſiaſtical the Canons of our Church give to our Kings in parallel to what was exerciſed by the Chriſtian Emperors of the Primitive Church.

Thrice, I think, according to ſome Hiſtorians, twice I am ſure according to *Valeſius*, in the Appendix to his Latin Verſion of *Euſebius* his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, *Conſtantine* did diſpenſe with the Imperial Laws, by Indulgence and Toleration of the Donatiſts in *Africa*: And for that purpoſe cauſed his Declaration of Indulgence to be publiſhed, directed *Univerſis Epiſcopis per Africam*, to all the Biſhops throughout *Africa*, as it is found extant among the Writings of *Optatus*, and almoſt in the like words, and for the like Reaſons on which His Majeſty iſſued out this His preſent Declaration of Liberty: Some part of it I will therefore repeat: *Quod fides debuit, quantum prudentia valuit, prout piritas potuit, tentaſſe me per omnia optimè ſcitis, ut juxta Magiſteria Legis noſtræ Pax ſtabilita, per omnem concordiam teneretur. Sed quia vim illam ſceleris infuſi —— intentionis noſtræ ratio non potuit eò ſanare —— expectandum nobis eſt, dum totum hoc——Omnipotentis Dei miſericordia vindicetur.—— Verum dum Cæleſtis Medicina procedat, hactenus ſunt concilia noſtra Moderanda ut patientiam percolamus, & quidquid inſolentia illorum pro conſuetudine intemperantiæ, tentat aut facit id omne tranquillitatis virtute toleremus, nihil ex reciproco reponatur injuriæ,* &c.

This

This Declaration of Indulgence had likewiſe the ill fortune of His preſent Majeſties, to be regrated by ſome of the Churchmen, and the ſeverity of the eſtabliſhed Laws againſt the Donatiſts, ſomwhat unwillingly reſtrained, and *Conſtantine*, by ſome of them, particularly by *Cæcilianus*, Biſhop of *Carthage*, ſolicited to revoke his Letters of Indulgence; whereupon, ſays the Hiſtorian, in the year 321. The Biſhops on the part of *Donatus*, put up their Petition alſo to the Emperor, *Poſcentes ut liberè ipſos agere ſineret, nec invitos ad Communionem Cæciliani cogere vellet.* Adding further, that they never ſhould, either by Promiſes or Threats, be induced to it, and that they would rather dye a thouſand deaths, than to hold Communion with that Knave (as they rudely ſtyled the Biſhop) againſt their Conſciences.

And here (as the Hiſtorian goes on) did moſt of all appear the Clemency of the Emperor; that when he ought to have puniſhed this impudence, and inſolence of the Donatiſts, in calling their Archbiſhop Knave, whoſe Innocency was well known and approved by *Conſtantine* himſelf; *Nihilominus ipſis quæcunq; poſcebant ſolita benignitate indulſit.* Nevertheleſs, of his wonted Benignity he Granted what Indulgence they deſired; iſſuing out to *Verinus*, his (*Vicarius*) Vicar-General in *Africa*, a Reſcript, ſignifying his pleaſure, that the Donatiſts ſhould be recalled from Baniſhment; *Monenſq; ut proprio eos dimittat arbitrio, ac furorem eorum Deo vindici reſervet*, &c. All this *Conſtantine* did by the Virtue of that Authority, in Cauſes Eccleſiaſtical; which the Godly Kings had among the *Jews*, and the *Chriſtian* Emperors of the Primitive Church, and, which ſays the Canon further, is the Regal Supremacy of this Crown, and by the Laws of this Realm therein eſtabliſhed.

Now, if the Church of *England* be the ſame it was then, you ſee by what meaſures we are to Govern ourſelves in the preſent Affair. Dr. *Taylor*, late Biſhop of *Downe and Connor*, I think, was a Man, who underſtood, how far a Church of *England* Loyalty ought to extend, as any Man this day of it; He ſays plainly in his *Ductor Dubitantium, Vol.* 2. *lib.* 3. *p.* 148. That the Supreme Power is above the Laws; that he can diſpenſe with Laws, he can interpret them, and he can abrogate them, he can in time of neceſſity Govern by the Laws of Reaſon, without any written Law, and he is Judge of the neceſſity, and in all this he warrants him, as the Canon does, by the Power which the Kings of *Judah* had; and, in the later end of that Chapter, ſays, that this Prerogative of Kings is not againſt Law, but by Law, and that the Laws themſelves imply ſo much, and have given this leave. The ſame Loyal Biſhop in the ſaid Treatiſe further notes, the great ſubmiſſion which the Biſhops of *Rome* themſelves made to the Imperial Laws, and that, even when they liked them, and when they lik'd them not; and of all, moſt material (ſays he) is the Obedience of *St. Gregory* the Great to *Mauritius* the Emperor. who made a Law, that no Soldier ſhould turn Monk without his leave. This *St. Gregory* eſteem'd to be an impious Law, he modeſtly admoniſhed the Emperor of the irreligion of it. But *Maurice*, nevertheleſs, commanded him to publiſh that Law. The good Biſhop knew his Duty, obeyed his Prince, ſent it up and down the Empire, and gave this account of it: *Utrobiq; quæ debui exolvi, qui Imperatori obedientiam præbui, & pro Deo quod ſenſi minimè tacui.* I have done both my

 Duties

Duties, I have declared my Mind for God, and have paid my Duty and Obedience to the Emperor. *Doctor Dubit. Vol. 3. Lib. 2. p. 176.* This that Learned and Loyal Bishop remarks as a president to Guide and Govern Churchmen in the like Cases. And by the way we may note upon the Story, that in those days, when *St. Gregory* publish'd an Edict of the Emperor's, which, to him seemed impious, Reading was not thought to be Teaching. If you reply, that the model and measures of our Government are different, and will not admit of so high a Prerogative in our Princes, as was exercised in those unbounded and absolute Monarchies.

What! not in Causes Ecclesiastical? Was it well done then of the Arch-Bishops, and Bishops of our Church in Convocation, to run the parallel of that Obedience we owe to His Majesty in Causes Ecclesiastical, up to the height of what was used *by the Godly Kings among the Jews, and Christian Emperors of the Primitive Church, and to hold him Excommunicate*, ipso facto; *Whosoever should affirm the contrary, and not restored, but only by the Archbishop, after his Repentance, and publick Revocation of those his wicked Errors*?

And had not you better have held your peace, than on this occasion, to have medled with the Constitution of the Church of *England*, to which you have subscribed. I think this a time to have been more reserved.

2. Your Second Reason, wherefore we cannot Consent, and consequently not Read, follows;

Because it is to Teach an unlimited, and universal Toleration, which the Parliament in 72 Declared illegal, and which has been condemned in the Christian Church in all ages.

How well you have reasoned from the Constitution of the Church of *England* in such points of it as relate to this matter, let others Judge. Your next proof is drawn from the Civil Constitution, with Respect to the Parliament of *England*, that says it is illegal.

How, the Parliament of *England*? Where are the Three Estates, Where the King? Did all these Declare it illegal?

I wonder you will so much reproach the Clergy of *England*, with whom you deal in this Discourse, as to think them such as may be shammed again with the old Wheadle of 41. No, no, Sir, we know enough, and have felt enough, and too lately, yet to forget it, of such Parliaments, as would have their Votes and Ordinances Obligatory to the Subject, without the Assent and Authority of the King: And yet this is the Authority, and the best you have to alledge, or say for yourself, in justification of your Disobedience, and Opposition to His Majesty in this Affair.

The Parliament (say you) in 72. Declared it illegal; What then? What is the Parliaments Declaration to us in this, or in any other matter, so as to make it illegal, ever the more without the King? Is this after the Constitution of a Monarchical Government? Does not a pretence to such a Power in a Parliament, without the concurrent Authority of the King, subvert the Fundamental Laws of this Kingdom? But I assure myself, that they in that matter, assumed not to themselves, such a Power as your Letter would give them. Why may not a Vote of the House of Lords and Commons in 41.

the

the King diſſenting, be as good an Authority, as one in 72. the King diſſenting? On the ſame grounds you may as well determine againſt the Kings Soveraign, and his Negative Voice, as his diſpenſing Power. For it was then reſolved, and while they were yet a legal Parliament, as that in, I mean that of 41. *That the Soveraign Power reſides in both Houſes, and that the King ought to have no Negative Voice. Reſolved alſo, That whatſoever they Declared to be Law, ought not to be queſtioned by the King.*

But to theſe Votes the King never gave his Aſſent, wherefore they ſignifie nothing to us; but the Opinion of thoſe men, at that time: The Soveraign Power, and the Negative Voice, and the Authority of Declaring what is Law, and what is not Law, ſtanding where it did before, for all their Declaring otherwiſe then; or the Parliament in 72. Declaring afterward.

But I humbly conceive (as I ſaid before) that the Parliament in 72. never meant to extend their Vote to the Uſes you have made of it in your Letter. The worſt which can be made of it, is no more than that the Queſtion being at that time moved about the Diſpenſing Power in the King, they ſhewed their Judgment, but left the matter remaining undetermin'd. For you muſt know, it was no more than the Opinion, and not the Sentence of Illegality, which was paſſed on the King's Diſpenſing Power at that time. They knew well enough that to be an Unparliamentary proceeding, and that they had no Authority to drive that buſineſs ſo far, without the joynt Concurrence of the King; only it is ſome Mens preſumption, or ignorance to give them more. Where there is a matter of Queſtion, or Doubt between the King and the Parliament; the Houſe of Lords, or the Houſe of Commons, or both, having by the King's leave, the liberty of free ſpeaking there, may give their Judgment by paſſing a Vote, ſo as to incline to their Opinion, and obtain the Kings, if they can, to a Conſent, and Concurrence with them; but not, ſo as to bind the Subject, or to defend them in their Diſobedience to the King: In the mean time, till the matter be more Legally, and Authentically, according to the Fundamental Laws and Conſtitutions of this Kingdom determined; which can be no otherwiſe than with the joynt conſent of the King, and His two Houſes of Parliament together. Till then, however problematically illegal, the thing is not Authoritatively illegal, and ſo, however ſhaken by the Opinions of ſome Great Perſons, yet ſtill left ſtanding within the Verge of the King's Command, and the Subjects Obedience. For by the Fundamental Laws of this Kingdom, and by a natural Allegiance to our Soveraign, and Union to him, as Members to our Politique Head, we are bound to obey the King, not only in all inſtances Legal, but in all matters not Illegal: Of which nature are all things, neither forbidden by God, nor by ſuch Perſons as have the ſufficient and plenary Authority to do the ſame, according to the Fundamental Laws and Conſtitution of this Monarchy; And of that nature is the Diſpenſing Power, which the Kings of *England* have always claimed to have over the Laws of their own, or of their Predeceſſors Enacting, in all ſuch Emergencies, as, with the change of Times and Circumſtances, they become deſtructive and noxious; as firſt, and principally to the Head, ſo to the other parts, which make up, together with Himſelf, the whole Body Politique.

It

It is ordinary for ſome diſcontented Perſons, diſcountenanced at Court, diſplaced from Office, defeated in their Expectations, &c. to draw a Party along with them, or to ſute themſelves to one formed to their hands, and by theſe, eſpecially in Parliaments, to ſhew their reſentments by their perverſeneſs and croſsneſs to the King's Affairs; which nevertheleſs may be, and are for the moſt part fruſtrated, without any conſiderable detriment to the Publick, through the wiſe Conſtitution of this Kingdom, which ſoon leaves theſe weak and ſpiteful Efforts to turn to nothing but froth, and bubble, wanting the Support and Authority of the Royal Aſſent.

But how diſingenious, and diſagreeing to Men, eſpecially of our Order, is it? to rake into the aſhes of ſuch long ſince departed Feuds and Factions, and to raiſe up again, what Time and Oblivion had buried, to ſerve us in this Cauſe againſt the King.

If we meaſure and form our Obedience by ſuch Precedents, and make ſuch Votes of Parliament ſerve inſtead of Laws, when our Intereſt wants them. What hints will others be apt to take from our examples, and perhaps, when they want a better Reaſon for their Diſobedience, to remember the King of that Vote of Parliament, which Declared *The Legality of excluding Him from the Inheritance and Succeſſion to the Crown.* Or that which Declared *All thoſe to be reputed and taken as Enemies to Parliaments, who ſhould lend the King any Money:* And yet ſuchas this, is the beſt Authority you produce for us to depend upon, and to juſtifie our preſent manage againſt His Majeſty, before God and the World.

Well, what is it then the Parliament (as you call it) in 72. Declared illegal?

Why, an Univerſal and Unlimited Toleration, you ſay; was that all? The extent and latitude of the Indulgence then Granted, againſt which they excepted?

I believe it was rather the Authority, on which it was founded; if an Univerſal, and Unlimited Toleration be all, againſt which you except. From whom, or what part of the Diſſenters, would you have His Majeſty withdraw his Indulgence, to make it ever the more Legal on your Principle, to the reſt. I doubt your Parliament of 72. would not have thanked you for this: But let that paſs among your other Inconſiſtencies with yourſelf, into which I perceive you often unwarily fall. Whatever was done then, here, I am ſure His Majeſty by expreſs words in the Declaration, is ſo far from excluding His Parliament from their ſhare, either in the Authority of paſſing it into a Law, or of the Wiſdom and Council to be uſed, within what Latitude or Limits to bound it; as he refers all to the Concurrence of His two Houſes in Parliament.

As for the Univerſality, and Unlimitedneſs of the Toleration, if that ſo much offend you, and that you and your Parliament of 72. place all your Illegality of the King's Indulgence there. I hope you will have content with a little patience, there ſhall be no Toleration of Vice, of Blaſphemy, and Immorality, and Profanation of the Lords day, as I hear ſome complain; there is none, I am ſure, intended now. However, the Toleration at preſent, is to be accounted on that ſcore; but in the nature of an Interim, or Suſpenſion, as

as the State of things will permit, till ſuch a meeting of the King, with his Parliament for a further Regulation.

But this Reaſon is not done with yet, for ſuch a Toleration is not only declared Illegal by the Parliament of 72, but condemned by the Church in all Ages.

I wonder, Sir, how you come ſo Heterogenouſly here, to yoke together the Parliament of 72, and the Chriſtian Church of all Ages.

I ſhould have thought, that would have ſorted better with a part of it ſelf, the Church of *England*.

Sir, do you know of any unkindneſs between them, that having in your firſt Reaſon, ſo fair an occaſion to have brought them in, and have ſet them down by our own Church, as both agreeing in the ſame Sentiment.

You have rather choſen to place them in the Parliament of 72, as if they were Members of that; but that I could forgive you, if you had not proceeded with Repreſenting them Falſly, to have condemned ſuch a Toleration in all Ages, as the King has Granted by His preſent Declaration.

If you did but uſe your ſelf a little more to Think before you Write, it would have been obvious to you, from the account, the Scriptures give of the Firſt Age, that you had ſtumbled at the Threſhold.

Our Saviour himſelf, the Head of the Church, gave an early check to that manner of Spirit.

As for the deſcending Ages of the Church, I have given you under the Head of your firſt Reaſon, ſome account, how matters ſtood in the Age of *Conſtantine*, with reſpect to Toleration, and refer you further to other Pens, who have induſtriouſly treated on this Subject, and have ſufficiently ſhewed your Error.

If you mean, that the Chriſtian Church in all Ages did never ſo Tolerate Diſſenters, from Her declared Doctrines, as not to note and diſcover them, and expoſe them to her *Anathema's*. I grant you all this: In Gods Name, let not the Church ſpare Her Cenſures: The Declaration pretends not to take from them any thing of their own; I mean, their Spiritual Power, but only to Suſpend ſuch Temporal Penalties as belong to him only to inflict: Which is a thing ſo far from being condemned by the Chriſtian Church in all Ages, that the firſt three Ages were merely Paſſive themſelves, and as in no diſpoſition, ſo in no condition, to inflict Temporal Penalties upon others.

In the three following Ages, indeed, when the Emperors themſelves became Chriſtians, they had not only the favour and protection of the Laws for themſelves, but the Civil Sword alſo ſometimes turned upon their Adverſaries, but this was precarious only, and of ſpecial Grace and Favour, for which they were Thankful, and not pretended a ſtanding and unalterable Law, by which Princes were bound to it whether they would or no, and with whatſoever hazard of their Perſons, diſturbance of their Governments, or regret to their Conſciences.

As for the other ſucceeding Ages of the Church, after the Sixth Century, the Church of *England* throws them aſide as no Precedents for us to follow.

And yet it is the Chriſtian Church in all Ages, you would call in to avouch for you the Illegality of this Toleration.

3. Your

3. Your next Reaſon, on which you ground your ſuppoſe that we cannot Conſent, you thus expreſs,

It is to Teach my People, that they need never come to Church more, but have my free leave, as they have the Kings leave, to go to a Conventicle or to Maſs.

Why, Sir, that they would do without the Kings leave, or yours either, before this Declaration came out.

However, you are loth to have your Scepter wreſted out of your Hands, though it be with as vain and empty a Title, as King of *Jeruſalem*.

What a Grand Seignior you may be ſtill in your Pariſh, I cannot tell; but I aſſure you, in our Country Pariſh Dominions, ſuch a deſpotick Church-Power is extinguiſhed long ſince.

Well, Sir, I perceive you are not inclin'd to be ſo merciful a Prince over your Subjects, as His Majeſty over His, they ſhall never have leave for you.

But your Brother King would intreat however this favour at your Hands, that when you have occaſion to ſhake your Rod over your Subjects, you would not ſend for him to be your Beadle.

And the rather, becauſe, as he has no mind to it, and that it is againſt his Conſcience, ſo you have no want of him neither, the Spiritual Power having a Rod of their own, more proper and agreeable to their purpoſe, that is, the Rod of Excommunication, and other Church Cenſures, which no body goes about to take out of your Hand.

Wherefore, when you Read the Declaration, you may let your People underſtand, (if you pleaſe,) that it is with a *Non Obſtante* to that, and ſo you have well enough eſcaped the Danger, you fear ſhould enſue to your Regalia, *viz.*

That it would be to Teach your People, that they need never more come to Church, but have your free leave, as they have the Kings leave, to go to a Conventicle or to Maſs.

And ſo I paſs on to your Fourth Reaſon.

4. It is, you ſay, to Teach the diſpenſing Power, which alters what has been formerly thought the whole Conſtitution of this Church and Kingdom, which we dare not do, till we have the Authority of Parliament for it.

At the Kings Command you dare not do it, till you have the Authority of Parliament for it. It ſeems then however you are bound in Conſcience not to approve of ſuch a Declaration: Though it be againſt the Conſtitution of the Church of *England*, nay, though condemned by the Chriſtian Church in all Ages, though againſt the Laws of God, and the Laws of the Land; yet Authority of Parliament can diſcharge you of all.

Never was any Pope in *England* ſo high, as Authority of Parliament is now ſet up, that can diſpenſe with the Laws both of God and Man; for all this of the Kings doing is againſt both, you ſay, but not of the Parliaments. By the way, though you give a fair Hint unto the Parliament, of the only Expedient, as things now ſtand, for the Common Peace, Agreement and Satisfaction of all, which is, by their concurring with His Majeſty in the ſetling what He has propoſed by His Declaration. For one part of the Nation approve of it for it ſelf; and all the reſt want nothing, it ſeems, for their intire Satisfaction, but only their Authority along with His Majeſties.

At

At the preſent the main thing you ſtick at, is, The Kings Diſpenſing Power without Authority of Parliament: Which indeed is the only thing you have ſaid which bears any ſemblance of excuſe for not conſenting, and conſequently not reading, the Declaration. And you would have done better to have maintained your Poſt here, than to have ſtuffed your Letter with *Enemies, Evil Counſellors, Popery, Maſs, Ruine, utter and avoidable Deſtruction to both Church and Kingdom.*

I have been fain to follow you hitherto in this wild Ramble, which is nothing to the purpoſe, but to inflame and exaſperate Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, People, and all againſt the King, and make the Breach wider than it would be. Was not his late Majeſty, who was a Proteſtant, and by the Advice of Proteſtant Councellors, the adored Earl of *Shaftsbury*, the Duke of *Lauderdale*, and others, forced to do the ſame thing, when neceſſity of Publick Affairs required it? Yet no Ruine of the Church of *England* followed, nor of the Proteſtant Religion, no Ruine, no Deſtruction, no Introduction of Popery, nor intended to follow. Some ſtir was then about the buſineſs of the Diſpenſing Power; but nothing to what it is now. Let us but quietly attend the expectation of a Parliament, and that is a thing which it is likely may cloſe of it ſelf; It did ſo before.

For indeed the Concurrence of His Two Houſes of Parliament, of which His Majeſty made no doubt, (as He ſays,) when He firſt ſigned out His Declaration, before we had royld the Nation.

The Concurrence, I ſay, of His Parliament, will bury up all in Silence and Peace, which is better than blow up ſo great a Flame, as would ariſe by ſtirring the Coals of this Conteſt.

Prerogative of the Crown, and Priviledges of Parliament, are Matters too Auguſt, for private Men as we are, to meddle in, much more to paſs Sentence, as your Letter does, and plainly ſay, The Diſpenſing Power is againſt the Laws and Conſtitution of this Church and Kingdom: That it is Illegal, which is ſo high a Preſumption, as can have no countenance for what was done in Parliament 72; for they have the Priviledge of free ſpeaking there: But out of Parliament perhaps it is a Crime of an higher Nature than we are aware. Even the Biſhops themſelves, though Perſons moving in ſo high a Sphere, and protected by ſo great a Power as the Pope was then in *England*; yet they are given to underſtand, as I find ſome Lawyers note, 18 *Hen.* 3. That for as much as they hold their Baronies of the King, that if they intermeddle with the Rights and Prerogatives of the Crown, they muſt look to forfeit their Baronies for their Preſumption. If, I ſay, the Biſhops out of Parliament incur ſo high a Cenſure, ſhould they do any ſuch thing, what Animadverſion is due to Men of a lower Order? Evil Men, ſuch as have ſome Fiſh to take, which will not be catch'd but in troubled Waters, are wont to throw in one of theſe, as certain Occaſions of it, and as Bones of Contention whenever they have a mind to have one. It would have becomed us, who are Men of Peace, of all Men in the Kingdom, to have contained our ſelves, and, whatever we think, to have ſaid nothing in this Matter.

Now is Out-cry againſt *Prerogative*; Time was, when we made as loud a Cry againſt *pretended Priviledges of Parliament*, *Liberty of the Subject*, and for *Prerogative*. Among other Complaints and Grievances, which the Black Parliament put into a Remonſtrance, and Preſented to *Charles* the Firſt, was, *Frequent Diſſolution of Parliaments*, *Raiſing of Ship-money*, *Suſpenſions*, *Excommunications and Degradations of divers Painful*, *Learned*, *Pious Miniſters*, &c. There comes in at laſt, a Complaint of His *Chaplains*, and other *Miniſters of the Church of* England, *Preaching before the King*, *againſt the Liberty and Property of the Subject*, *and for the Prerogative of the King above the Law*.

What will the World ſay of us, while they ſee us, blow hot and cold out at the ſame Mouth?

For my part, I beleive, the ſcratch is now, where it don't itch: Prerogative is not the thing does ſo much aggreive us. If it happened to be on our ſide, as we apprehend it now againſt us, we ſhould like Prerogative well enough. If we had liv'd in thoſe days, what ſhould we have thought of ſuch a Prerogative-Indulgence from Queen *Mary*, in the behalf of Her Proteſtant Subjects, from the Penal and Sanguinary Laws, then eſtabliſhed by Parliament? Would we not have dared to own it, to publiſh it in our Churches and Chapels, till we had Authority of Parliament for it?

Would we have deſerted and oppoſed ſo gracious a Queen, and ſtroke into a Confederacy, with the concurring Opinions of the Nobility and Gentry, *That to take away the Penal Laws at that time*, *would be but one ſtep from the introducing of Proteſtancy*?

I do not find the Clergy at all aggrieved at the Diſpenſing Power, when at any time ſerving for the Intereſt of the Proteſtant Religion. For inſtance: When King *Edward* the Sixth, by his mere Prerogative, diſpoſed of the Crown, for that Reaſon, to the Lady *Jane*, moſt expreſly contrary to a late eſtabliſh'd Law paſſed in Parliament, whereby the Crown was entailed on the Children of *Henry* the Eighth, of which, *Mary* and *Elizabeth* were both ſurviving, it was ſo far from a *daring not to do it*, *till we had Authority of Parliament for it*, *and from ſcrupling the Teaching*, *of that*, *which alters*, *what has been formerly Thought the whole Conſtitution of this Church and Kingdom*, That Doctor *Ridley* Biſhop of *London*, by Order of the Council, Preached a Sermon on purpoſe, at *Pauls-Croſs*, to ſet forth the Title of the Lady *Jane*, and to juſtifie the proceedings of the King and Council in that Affair. Doctor *Cranmer*, Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, was one of the Principal in the Council, and moſt of the reſt of the Biſhops and Clergy complied with, and approved of it, and commended it to their People.

Nor were the Nobility and Gentry averſe from it.

After Queen *Elizabeth*, by the ſame Eſtabliſhed Laws, the Succeſſion of the Crown was to paſs to *Mary* Queen of *Scots*; but ſhe being a profeſſed Catholick, what intrigues were driven to exclude Her, in favour of the Proteſtant Religion, and alſo Her Son *James* the Firſt of *England*, yet in his Infancy, (and probably enough) ſuppoſed to bring with him His Mothers Religion?

Did not the Parliament offer to the Queen, (I cannot tell, but it paſſed to an Act,) to enable Her to nominate Her Succeſſor to the Crown? *Was not this*

to

to alter what had been formerly thought, the whole Conſtitution of this Church and Kingdom ?

Did not *Charles* the Firſt, the Proteſtant Martyr, authoriſe the Canons of the Convocation 1640, by His Prerogative-Royal, the Biſhops and Clergy rightly aſſerting and eſpouſing His Authority and Power in that matter; nevertheleſs, for the Parliaments declaring at the ſame time the Illegality of the thing, and *That it was againſt the whole Conſtitution of this Church and Kingdom.* So that it is not ſo much the Parliament of 72, nor the Conſtitution of the Church and Kingdom, but ſomthing elſe in the Wind, which makes us ſo off the Hooks with Prerogative and Diſpenſing Power, at this time; ſomething we fear, which I am confident upon the Integrity of His Majeſties promiſe, we have no cauſe to Fear.

But ſince you have ſo rudely jogg'd Prerogative, for nothing in the World, that I can ſee, but happening to ſtand in your way at this time, I will try a little of my skill, as well as I can, to defend it: Treating firſt of the King's Diſpenſing Power in general: And Secondly, of the exerciſe of it in this particular Inſtance, which is the matter of the Declaration.

1. In General.

That ſuch a Power of diſpenſing with the Laws, at leaſt, in the interim of Parliaments be lodged ſomewhere, is grounded upon the ſame reaſon, as of making Laws, which is for the common good.

Salus populi eſt Suprema Lex.

Laws abſtract from the Sanctions, whereby they are injoyn'd, are nothing elſe but Proviſions made, as at the firſt; ſo on every ariſing occaſion of promoting the common Good, and conſequently, of averting any proſpect of evil.

But for Parliaments, in which ſo great a number of Men are employed, and at ſo great a charge as that muſt be to the Nation, to Sit continually watching and waiting upon ſuch contingent occaſions, were almoſt as intolerable as any other evil the Laws would prevent. Somtimes Laws Salutary, and fitting to the juncture wherein they were made, with ſome unexpected Providence, Viciſſitude, or other un-thought Emergency, change their nature, and become noxious. Beſides that, many Evils, even pernicious, and deſtructive to Common-wealths, are ſomtimes ſo ſudden and impendent, as the Remedy would come too late in that way. Somtimes of that nature, that, as nothing but diſpatch, ſo nothing but Secreſie can avert them. Somtimes ſo fixed in a popular miſtake, and miſunderſtanding, as nothing but Time, and Reaſoning can make the diſcovery, and generally enough, diſpoſe the Nation to conſent to a Remedy. And what, muſt the Publick ſuffer perhaps an intolerable Evil, or an irrepairable Ruin, for want of applying an extraordinary Remedy in ſuch Emergent caſes ?

That it is not expedient only, but neceſſary for the publique Good, that a Truſt be repoſed ſomwhere, to make proviſion for the ſecurity of the whole Politique Body, in ſuch grand Emergencies, and to judge of the matter, and of the means proper for averting the Evil; I think, is by no body denied; Whether it be ſo in our written Laws, it makes no matter: I am ſure, he that runs may read it in the original Prototype of all Laws, which is right

Reaſon, even in the Fundamental Laws, and Conſtitution of this Kingdom, and all other Human Societies.

The Parliament of 41. could ſee a diſpenſing Power thus far, thô they could not, or, which is blinder, would not ſee to ſet the Saddle on the right Horſe.

It is reſolved, (ſay they, by both Houſes) that in this caſe of extreme danger, and of His Majeſties refuſal, the Ordinance, agreed upon by both Houſes, for the Militia doth oblige the People, by the Fundamental Laws of the Kingdom.

It being ſo then, that by the Fundamental Laws of this Kingdom, written, or unwritten, ſuch a Diſpenſing Power with the preſent eſtabliſh'd Laws, is neceſſary at ſome times to be interpoſed. I know not, nor do I believe that any one elſe can tell me, where it can be wiſer and ſafer lodged, than in the Care and Conduct of the King. The whole Government was by the People at firſt entruſted to no other Law, but the confidence they had in the Love and Wiſdom, and Care and Conduct of their Princes: And if it proved otherwiſe than they expected, there was no remedy but Patience. *Ferenda ſunt regum ingenia*, ſays *Tacitus*; and perhaps much better than *Parliamentorum Ingenia, ut Sterilitas, & cætera naturæ mala.* As unfruitful Seaſons, and other Evils of Nature we cannot help.

When the people of *Iſrael* asked of *Samuel* a King to judge them, and to go out before them, and fight their Battels, like as all the other Nations had round about them. *Samuel* told them, what would be the manner of ſuch a King as they deſired, like to the Kings of other Nations.

1 Sam. 8. 11. *He will take your Sons and appoint them for himſelf, for his Chariots, and to be his horſemen, and ſome ſhall run before his chariots.* 12. *And he will appoint him captains over thouſands, and captains over fifties, and will ſet them to ear his ground, and to reap his harveſt, and to make inſtruments of war, and inſtruments of his chariots.* 13. *And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.* 14. *And he will take your fields and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the beſt of them, and give them to his ſervants.* 15. *And he will take the tenth of your ſeed, and of your vineyards, and give them to his officers, and to his ſervants.* 16. *And he will take your men-ſervants, and your maid-ſervants, and your goodlieſt young men, and your aſſes, and put them to his works.* 17. *He will take the tenth of your ſheep, and ye ſhall be his ſervants.* And ver. 18. *Ye ſhall cry out in that day, becauſe of your king, which ye ſhall have choſen you, and the Lord will not hear you in that day.* This might be the manner of Kings, you ſee, even of Gods own allowing, v. 22. And againſt whom, 1 *Sam.* 23. 6. Even *David* himſelf dare not ſtretch forth his Hand; yet ſuch a Government God protected and owned, and was generally the manner of Kings, both with the *Iſraelites*, and all other nations.

Such Governments the Goſpel found eſtabliſhed generally over the world, and to ſuch Chriſt himſelf was ſubject, and owned ſuch as a legal Government, by paying Tribute to *Cæſar*. To ſuch Principalities and Powers *St. Paul* would have Chriſtians put in mind to be ſubject, and ſuch Magiſtrates to obey. And ſuch as was then the Imperial Authority of the *Romans*, it is more than probable, was the manner of Government, taken up, and continued by ſuch

Princes

Princes, into whose hands the several parts of the Empire were broken afterward.

As for our Princes of this Nation, that they were not admitted to their Regal Authority, by Compact with the People, and on performance of Covenants or Laws to them; (to omit other Arguments at present) has sufficient evidence, that our Laws have been all along, and are at this day impetrated from His Majesty, by the humble Request, and Petition of our Representatives in Parliament; Bargains do not use to be driven, but Favours begged in that precarious style. The Kings of *England* will hereafter turn a deaf Ear to our Requests, when they understand what we ask of them, is by degrees to part with, and steal away their Prerogative, and by every new Law they Grant us, to make themselves so much the less Kings. It is no wonder, that our Kings have been in these later days surprized, they have not been aware of the Train laid, to cause them to diminish their own Power, and by little and little to Grant away their Crown, and leave nothing but that which will almost of it self turn into a Common-Wealth: This is a Mine underground, in which there have been a long while, and are now more Hands at Work than ever before. English-men have not heretofore wonted to be so disingenious toward their Princes, and it can be for no good end, that with such obdurate Stiffness, some have hardned others against all compliance with His Majesty to the Repeal, or but to endure the Suspension of a Law, by which Himself, and perhaps two parts in three of the Nation, is incommoded and aggrieved, and by parting with it, no injury done by the rest; while they know too, in the mean time, that it is all by His Indulgence and Favour, that they have had, or can have for the future, the grant of such Laws as they want for their own Accommodation: And that it is in His Power to hinder the Revocation or Repeal of the same Laws, when we complain never so much of their Evil or Inexpediency.

It may come in the way of our Princes shrewdly to Reraliate this our Injustice towards Them, as well as Ingratitude and Insensibleness of their Favours. They are such Measures, as we would not have meted to our Selves.

However, it is, and of Right ought to be, in the Power of His Majesty, to help Himself, if we will not: And that will appear from what I have said, that our Laws are all Acts of Grace and Grant from our Kings. Many of them are such, whereby he has Graciously vouchsaf'd to divest Himself off, and release the Subject from part of that Absolute and Arbitrary Power, which the King had over us in those instances, and wherein they complain'd, and begg'd to be delivered of the uneasiness. Others, are Grants and Condescensions in compliance with us, for the promoting our Good, or averting the prospect of some publick Evil.

In all which Grants, as it is certain, that as the King at present apprehended no evil to Himself by them, (for else he would not have granted them,) so when he admits them to pass into Laws, it must be supposed with a Reservation of His Prerogative and a Power of Dispensing with them, in all such Cases or Emergencies, as they shall appear to be so afterward. Especially in matters of so high concern, wherein His Life either Temporal or Eternal is indangered, I

mean

mean His Person or His Conscience. And though with other lesser instances, our Kings do for the most part Graciously bear, for the quiet and content of the People; yet in such as these they cannot, they ought not to forbear the use of their Royal Prerogative.

With this Caution and Reservation, *Justinian* notes the Laws granted to the People of *Rome*, by himself and other his Predecessors.

Omnibus a nobis dictis, Imperatoris excipiatur fortuna, cui & ipsas Deus leges Subjecit.

From all those before recited Laws, (says he,) the Fortune of the Emperor is to be excepted, for to that the Divine Providence over Princes, has subjected the Laws themselves.

This therefore take along with you as a thing of most remarkable Note, That for as much as the King is, as it were, the Vitals, the Soul and Centre of the whole Body Politique; whatever does tend to the indangering the Safety of His Person, the retrenching His Power, the violating His Honour or His Conscience, is to be judged of like Malign Influence on all, there can be no *Salus Corporis*, where there is not *Salus Capitis*. And therefore the like Security to be provided for it, if need be, by the like extraordinary Remedies: That is to say, by the Prerogative, out of the common Rode of Parliamentary Proceedings. Dispensing in the mean time with the Obligation of all such Laws as stand in the way of this otherwise insuperable Difficulty; and suspending the Penalties of them, till a fitting Season, for a Convention of Parliament to take farther Order.

Now at such a Dispensing Power, and in such Circumstances, some, especially of the Church of *England*, are highly offended; They will not be subject to it, though it be clear as the Dictates of Right Reason can make it. And not against Law, as they suggest, for it is founded upon the Supremest Law, the most Sacred and Fundamental Law of all Nations, which is, as I said, *Salus Populi*, I mean of the Body together with the Head; for which in such Junctures, he who would reject this, is to be intreated, that he would first enlighten the World with a Discovery of some safer and wiser Expedient in its stead. And yet with how much Moderation and Princely Clemency and Tenderness, and especially towards the Church of *England*, does His Majesty exert this His necessary Prerogative at this time? Such as, I think, might have more especially obliged them, above others, to an Address of Thanks, among the rest of His grateful Subjects,

Bona si sua norint.

Well, having thus far cleared a Necessity of such a Trust, as we call Prerogative, in the King, to be lodged somewhere, as a Provision against such Contingencies, in all wisely-constituted, and not self-confounding, Societies; What remains now, is to vindicate His Majesty in the Use and Exercise of it at this time as necessary.

1. For the Preservation of Himself. And,
2. For the Common Good of All.

1. For

1. For Himſelf, with reſpect to the Preſervation eſpecially of His Perſon and His Conſcience from outward Violence.

But firſt of His Perſon: That His Majeſty Himſelf, in His Perſon, (with whoſe Safety the whole Government and the Publick Good is ſo complicate,) was, and would ſtill be, in apparent danger, if His Prerogative had not interpoſed with a Suſpenſion of ſome of the formerly eſtabliſhed Laws, is a thing of which any Man may be convinced, who is not reſolved otherwiſe.

What is the Support and Safety of a Prince, eſpecially ſurrounded with a multitude of Enemies, but Power to ſuppreſs them by more, or at leaſt equal, Numbers? Now let any Man take the Meaſures of His Majeſties Power and Numbers, at the time of His coming to the Succeſſion of the Crown, with proportion to the Number and Power of thoſe who had given Him juſt Reaſon to ſuſpect and fear them as His Enemies, who had always been before His Brothers Enemies, His Fathers Enemies, had taken away the Life of the one, and narrowly miſſed the Deſtruction of the other, and that but upon Jealouſie of their Inclination; much more bitter Enemies to His Majeſty, upon the Declaration of Himſelf, and publickly owning the Roman Catholique Religion.

Alas! His whole Strength, (except that of the Almighty God,) what was it, but a few Roman Catholiques, added to the Loyal of the Church of *England*? If it had been the whole Church of *England*, we know how few they were, in reſpect of the Shoales of the Factious and Diſcontented. How often had they been over-powered and baffled by them in the Election of Knights, Burgeſſes, Sheriffs of the City, *&c.* and no way able to ſupport their Intereſt againſt them, with their whole Strength?

But how great a Defalcation of that is to be made from thoſe who adhered to His Majeſty, may be computed from the ſmall Number of thoſe in the Houſe of Commons, who ſtood with Him againſt the Excluſion-Bill on the one Side; And from the no ſmall Number of thoſe of the Church of *England*, who were divided from the Loyal, in that Traiterous Practice of ſupplanting Him, by the Intruſion of the unhappy Duke of *Monmouth* into the Succeſſion, on the other Side.

And though indeed, many of the Excluding Members recovered their Honour and their Loyalty, in the firſt Seſſion of His Majeſties Parliament, when they declared their adhering to him with their Lives and Fortunes, againſt the Pretenſions and Practices of the Rebels, yet could they not lay again the Spirit they had Conjur'd up, the common People, I mean, ſo generally prejudic'd by their Excluſion-Vote, that notwithſtanding His Majeſties almoſt Miraculous Succeſs and Victory over them in the Weſt, they ſtill perſiſted in the Alienation of their Minds from their Lawful Prince; and no corner of the whole Nation but was ſtuffed full of them, who were content to beleive the Duke of *Monmouth* yet alive, and that they ſhould have another day, to try their Fortunes, againſt his Majeſty in Rebellious Armes.

Againſt this multitude, nevertheleſs, he doubted not but to ſupport Himſelf and His Crown, by uniting His Catholick Subjects, into one State-intereſt with thoſe of the Church of *England*, neither of them alone being ſufficient to make any conſiderable Balance.

To

To this purpose in the next Session of Parliament he moved, that to have the benefit and Service of all His Loyal Subjects, and that none of them might be under any disability for the future, that they would joyn with him in a Repeal of certain Acts of Parliament, made in the 25 and 30 of *Carol.* 2. whereby certain Oaths and Tests and Subscriptions, were required to be made and taken of such as were admitted into any publick imployment.

The Consideration of the State of things, and Circumstances of His Majesties Affaires, together with their Loyalty, so signally shewed in the former Session of Parliament, made Him believe He should not be denied, what to Him seemed so reasonable and necessary for the preservation of Himself and all.

But instead of that, all He could obtain, was no more, than an Indemnity of what was past; for which they expected to be thanked of those Catholicks, who had merited so much from His Majesty, and the whole Nation, by their signal Service against the Rebels in the West. Which was an Answer so surprizing to His Majesty, as he told them, he did not expect from such a Parliament.

So that His Majesties Measures being broken here, and finding himself by this defeat of his Expectation, much weaker and the Power and Confederacy of his Enemies stronger.

And the Laws which should in the first place preserve him, as the Centre of the publick good, barring him of his just and sufficient Defence.

He is forced by his Prerogative, to provide for his own safety and His Friends, and to suspend the force of such Laws, as stood in the way of it, till the Nation should be better disposed to take a right understanding of the thing, and to make choice of such Members of Parliament, by whose Concurrence the Provision for His Majesties Safety might be made.

It is true, the Church of *England* is hereby disobliged, but who can help it, or is to be blamed for it? it was offered to them first, and rejected by them. Will they be neither perswaded to afford His Majesty, together with theirs, the Service and Assistance of His *Roman Catholique* Subjects, (of whose Loyalty there can at this time be no doubt) for His sufficient defence, against His numerous and inveterate Enemies; nor yet allow him by His Indulgence of Liberty to their Consciences, to win them to a Dutiful, and Peaceable Subjection. Just such an unsociable rigor as this, now in the Church of *England* towards the *Roman Catholicks*, was that of the *Presbyterians* towards us, whom they then called Malignants, and which was the occasion of bringing His Majesty *CHARLES* I. of Sacred Memory, to the Scaffold, and all upon piques and dislikes one against another on point of Religion. The *Presbyterians* had a mind to Save the King, and deliver him out of the hands of the Army, which they then called Sectaries, but this was morally impossible to be done by them, upon the strength of their own single Interest, without inviting to their assistance the *Malignant* also, as they termed all those who stood well-affected to the King and Church; but by no means would they be perswaded to any conjunction with the *Royalists*, when His Majesties Life at that time depended upon it, and might have been secured by it; and even to the last point when the Army came up in their march towards the City with the poor

Captive

Captive KING in their power, they obſtinately refuſed to take in any of the King's Party to joyn with them, notwithſtanding all their frequent offers and importunities, and notwithſtanding their own ruine along with theirs; chooſing rather to deliver up the Common Cauſe, than to joyn with the King's Friends in one common Defence. Nay, to bring the parallel ſtill nearer, when it pleaſed the Divine Providence to make ſome aſpect towards the Reſtauration of His late Majeſty *CHARLES* II. to the Succeſſion of His Royal Fathers Crown; ſo imperious, and ill natur'd were they ſtill towards the poor *Cavaliers*, and ſo reſolved againſt admitting them to any ſhare in the Honour and Intereſt of the Enterprize, (however, their former Fidelity to His Majeſty might commend them, and His Affair need them,) that after the Secluded Members were re-admitted, a Reſolution taken of Convening a Free Parliament, in order to the King's Reſtauration; before their Riſing they paſſed theſe two Votes; One, *That all and every Perſon, who have Adviſed, Abetted, or Aſſiſted in any War againſt the Parliament, ſince* January *the Firſt*, 1641. *his, or their Sons, ſhould be uncapable to be elected to Serve as Members of the next Parliament.* And another, *That no Man ſhould act as a Commiſſion-Officer, without firſt Acknowledging and Declaring, That the War undertaken by both Houſes of Parliament, in their Defence, againſt the Forces raiſed in the name of the late KING, was Juſt and Lawful.*

What can more nearly reſemble thoſe Oaths and Teſts, which have been, of late years, laid upon ſo many of His preſent Majeſties Friends; and no doubt, with the ſame Deſign, and in a then probable proſpect of His Succeſſion to the Crown, *That if they ſhould fail of Excluding himſelf, yet at leaſt they might exclude a conſiderable number of His Friends from joyning their Force, and Aſſiſtance to the reſt, when He ſhould moſt need them; and ſo, one time or other, he might fall into their Power thus unarmed and deprived of His juſt and ſufficient Defence.*

The ſubtle Projectors, and Contrivers of this Intrigue, it is likely are now off the Stage, but ſince many of thoſe, who, I believe, have not the leaſt Malice againſt His Majeſties Perſon, are yet nevertheleſs ſo intoxicate with the fears and jealouſies they then imbib'd, that they are yet hardly ſober, and muſt have time to recover their debauched Reaſons. It is neceſſary in the mean time, that His Majeſty look to the preſervation of himſelf, and of them alſo, whoſe Loyalty is yet half aſleep, and who perhaps, when they are better awake, will find reaſon to thank him for interpoſing His Prerogative, againſt their obſtinate Defence of a Law ſo unreaſonable and unſafe, and thank God too, for that Courage and Wiſdom, with which he has inſpired him, to preſerve both them and Himſelf, and the whole Nation, from their precipitate Folly.

Theſe things conſidered, may, I think, ſatisfie any reaſonable unprejudic'd Man, of the juſtice and neceſſity of His Majeſties exerting His Royal Prerogative at this time, and in the manner he has expreſſed in His Declaration, for the preſervation of Himſelf, the Head of this great National Body, which cannot be touched with danger in that principal part, without a fatal evil to the whole; But with His Majeſties Perſon, I intimated alſo a *Salvo* for His Con-

 ſcience

ſcience, and that by His Prerogative, if he cannot have it otherwiſe.

Conſcience is the common anſwer on the account of which, the Nobility and Gentry do not conſent to His Majeſties Propoſals, for taking off the *Teſt* and *Penal Laws*. Is there not ſome regard to be had to the King's Conſcience, as well as other Mens? The King, no doubt, ſo ſincere and devout as he is, in the profeſſion of His Religion, accounts it a very high offence againſt God, and danger of Eternal Damnation to His Soul, to perſecute what He accounts the Truth, and to drive away, or terrifie any by *Penal Laws*, from embracing it. Who does not?

I believe alſo the inflicting of ſuch Penalties on any other for mere matter of Conſcience, is not without a great regret to His own. *That Conſcience ought not to be conſtrained, nor People forced, in matters of mere Religion*; are the expreſs words of His Declaration. Now all proſecution of Law againſt *Recuſants*, or what other Diſſenters from the eſtabliſh'd Doctrine and Diſcipline of the Church of *England*, muſt be made in the King's Name; and all Warrants, for the execution of Sanguinary, Pecuniary, or what other kind of Mulcts, iſſue from His Immediate Authority. So that no Man's Conſcience of the whole Nation is ſo nearly concern'd, nor ſo accountable to God for what relates to theſe Laws, as the King's Conſcience. I think no Man will ſay, that the King ought in the execution of ſuch Laws, to ſin againſt His Conſcience; or that we have ever the leſs obligation upon us to Own Him, and Obey Him as our King, and to comply with Him tenderly for the finding ſuch a temper, (if there be any better, than what He already offers) for the ſatisfaction of both His Conſcience and ours. Subjects may ſuffer for Conſcience ſake, and loſe ſome part of the priviledge of Subjects, rather than break the publick meaſures which have been eſtabliſhed. But Kings may not be conſtrained by Law to ſuffer, nor to diminiſh any part of their Royal Sovereignty, for that their Conſciences cannot comply with the execution of ſome Laws made by their Predeceſſors in matters of Religion. *Conſtantine* the Great, *Lucius*, *Ethelbert*, by the eſtabliſhed Laws, ſhould have perſecuted Chriſtianity, but then they muſt have done it againſt their Conſciences. *Julian* found Chriſtian Laws in the Empire, but he could not be bound by them againſt his Will, and retain the Authority of Emperor.

What would you have His Majeſty do? bring in an *Excluſion Bill* againſt Himſelf? lay down His Crown and Scepter at your Feet, and turn Subject to ſerve you? Or would you have Him do worſe, proſtitute His Conſcience to your pleaſure, and act againſt the intereſt of His Soul, to ſerve yours of the World?

Indeed, what would you have Him do wiſer and ſafer for His own Conſcience, and gentler and kinder for ours, than what is imported in that Declaration, which we ſuppreſs, notwithſtanding His Majeſties Command to publiſh it, and againſt which, your Letter endeavours to ſtir up the madneſs of the People, and to alienate their Hearts and Affections from ſo Gracious and ſo Wiſe, and ſo Religious a Prince.

You would have Him perhaps repreſent the Buſineſs to His Parliament, and leave it with them to excogitate ſome expedient for this emergent difficulty.

Well,

Well, and what muſt He do in the mean time? Sin againſt His Conſcience? No, ſuſpend: For Gods ſake then, what is this ſtir for? You know, Sir, His Majeſty has already attempted ſomething of this Nature with His firſt Parliament, but with no ſucceſs.

If you anſwer, It was not probably to be expected then; The Nation had not time enough to bethink themſelves to take a Right Underſtanding of the thing, and to apprehend the reaſonableneſs of His Majeſties Propoſals.

To all this I agree with you: *Magna molimina tardè moventur*: Matters of ſo great moment, and ſpringing from ſuch a ſurpriſing Viciſſitude of State, could hardly be ſo ſoon digeſted. Yet His Majeſty Diſſolved not that Parliament, till after He had condeſcended to Treat further of that Affair in His Cloſet, with moſt of the principal Members, and till He aſſured Himſelf of an utter averſeneſs in them to any reaſonable Complyance.

If you ſay then, He muſt leave it to the iſſue of the next Parliament, after ſo long a time as they have had to think over again: You ſay right, and ſo His Majeſty intends, and ſo He would have us ſignifie for the Peoples Satisfaction, by Reading this Declaration.

Well, but in this longer protraction of the time to another Parliament, what would you have Him do? Put theſe Laws in execution, not only againſt the Safety of His Perſon, but of His Conſcience too? Perſecute what He accounts the Truth? Apply Force, where in His Conſcience He judges nothing but Perſuaſion to be uſed?

I know no remedy for His Majeſties Conſcience in the interim, but a further ſuſpending and diſpenſing ſtill with ſuch Laws: Nor do I believe that you, or any Man elſe, can aſſign a better.

Why, He may not then make known the Continuance of His former Purpoſes in his firſt Declaration; and why may it not be publiſhed by us, the Miniſters of Conſcience, and whoſe Duty it is of all Men to be moſt tender, and of all others, towards His Majeſties Conſcience? And why not in our Churches and Chapels, where we have inſinuated generally to our People our own Miſtakes in common with others, even almoſt the whole Nations firſt haſtily taken up falſe Conception of His Majeſties Purpoſes?

Rightly to inform His Majeſties Conſcience, ſo far as is becoming, will not be taken amiſs from us: But if we find Him at a Point, and that He is not to be moved from His Sentiment in theſe Matters; I am confident none of us dare, I am ſure ought not, to adviſe His Majeſty to ſin againſt His Conſcience, no more than we would do it our ſelves againſt ours.

Upon which Conceſſion, we cannot fairly cenſure and oppoſe in the manner we do, His withdrawing His Authority from thoſe Laws, in the practice and proſecution of which His Conſcience muſt needs be violated. Theſe are the Straits into which our Gracious King is driven at this Juncture; He chuſes (according to His Judgment) to offend Man, rather than God: Can we blame Him? Nay, ought we not rather to applaud Him for it? We of the Clergy ought of all Men to lay our Hands upon our Mouths, and make no Clamors, nor give Him any Moleſtation on this account.

It is our own Doctrine, in His Majeſties Application, while there are ſuch

Diversities of Religion among us, and none more infallible than other on our Principles, and while Temporal Laws will be medling with them, and determining their Controversies; unless they could make it a Shoo to fit to every Foot, and to stretch to every Conscience, such Mutations and Troubles of State as we meet with now, are like frequently to return, and the Government will ever and anon be off the Hinges, new Exclusion-Bills to be brought into Parliaments, new Plots, and new Subjects for almost every new Prince.

To prevent such Convulsions of State, and probably, at one time or other, Dissolutions of the Government, as new Religions and new Consciences now a days multiply, His Majesty wisely propounds, that there be henceforth no disability on account of Conscience, as of Kings to Reign, so of Subjects to serve their Princes: In the mean time, nevertheless, for the satisfaction of our Consciences, as well as His own.

His Majesty further declares, "That he is resolved to use His uttermost "indeavours, to establish Liberty of Conscience on such just and equal Foun-"dations, as will render it unalterable, and secure to all People the Free Exer-"cise of their Religion for ever. And to those of the Church of *England* principally, and especially the Protestant Religion, as by them profest, and as by Law Established, he will protect and maintain supereminently above all others, as the National Religion: That as we shall give the Check to no other, so neither shall we be Checked by any in the free Exercise of our Consciences; nor in the quiet and full enjoyment of our Possessions.

You would have His Majesty continue to us, and protect and maintain us, in our Dominion, over all the Consciences of the Nation; in the putting to Death, Banishing, Imprisoning, Confiscating, and by all other means, (not to call it persecuting,) suppressing and keeping under all others of a different Persuasion.

His Majesty, would lend us His Power and Authority, to do all this for us too; if in Conscience he could, but I think we ought to excuse him in that; and I hope all Persons of Honour and Conscience will tenderly consider His Majesties Case as their own, and be satisfied that the King does no more in this Affair, than what any truly Conscientious Man, even on our own Principles, must have done. And as Himself has been on this account hither to necessitated to suspend the execution of the Penal Laws and Test, so they also when convened together in Parliament, will find some Temper, that no restraint or oppression shall for the future be laid upon the Consciences of our Kings by our Laws, their Consciences, as I said, being much more concerned and aggrieved in the Execution of such Penal Laws and Tests, by their Authority, than ours can be, who pretend that for the cause, wherefore we cannot comply with His Majesties Proposals for the taking them off.

This I have said, to justifie His Majesty in the present use of his Prerogative, as the necessary *Salvo* for His Conscience in this Conjuncture.

With His Conscience, I further intimated a care to be taken for the preserving his Honour, and that by his Prerogative, dispensing with such Laws, as by any new emergency contrary to their Primary intention, do interpose and cast a cloud upon it.

A Honour

Honour in Noble, much more in Royal, Perſonages, is by our Laws ratable at the value of Conſcience, what therefore they declare upon their Honour, is Equivalent to what Perſons of a leſs Honourable degree, declare upon their Oath.

But above all, the Honour of our Kings is a moſt ineſtimable Jewel of their Crowns, and Standard of their Government; it is upon the account of that, that their Subjects are diſpoſed to revere and obey them, to love them, to confide in them, to repoſe in them the truſt of all they are and have, and with their Lives and Fortunes to ſerve them.

Upon which account it is, having ſo great an intereſt in the Government, and well being of Mankind, in their reſpective Societies, and ſo great an Influence upon Subjects to ingage them to a quiet and tractable compliance with the wiſe conſults of their Subjects; hence, I ſay, it is that God himſelf is concerned for their Honour, commanding in His Holy Scriptures, that as we *Fear God*, ſo we ſhould *Honour the King*.

Let me note to you further, that our Laws are, for theſe great Reaſons, ſo tender of the Honour of Kings, as they will endure no attainder upon them, but ſo ſoon as from Subjects, they become Kings, whatever attainder was before upon them from the Laws, it falls of it ſelf, becauſe otherwiſe the Laws loſe their main end, laying a blot upon his Honour, and leſſening his eſteem with his People, from which does naturally ariſe many intolerable Evils to the Government.

And for the ſame reaſon, whatever Perſon is Convict of an attempt to Alienate from our Kings, the Affections of their Liege People, are looked on as Traitors, and reputed ſuch as do therein ſubvert the Fundamental Laws of this Kingdom, and if we follow the reaſon of the thing, for doubtleſs upon that the Law is Grounded, as any Perſon ſo any matter or thing, which tends to Alienate from the King the Affections of his Liege People, is by parity of Reaſon to be removed.

In ſhort, that which we call the Teſt, however agreeable it might be to the preſent Circumſtances in which it was made; yet now, as Circumſtances are by the Divine Providence changed, the continuing of it does reflect ſuch Diſhonour upon His Majeſty, as does evidently tend to alienate from Him the Affections of His Liege People, and that two ways:

1. As inſinuating Him to be a Conſpirator againſt the Life and Crown of His late Majeſty, in that which was called the Damnable Helliſh and Popiſh Plot. And,

2. As implying Him an Idolater againſt God, the Supreme Majeſty of Heaven and Earth.

Firſt, That the Teſt was made againſt the Roman Catholicks, on preſumption, that they were generally ingaged in, or one way or other Abettors of, that then reputed Horrid Plot: I think is too plain to be fairly denied.

If you object, That His Sacred Majeſty, then Duke of *York*, was Himſelf exempted from that Teſt, and ſo it could not reflect upon him.

I anſwer, Never the leſs for that. Nothing more ſerved their Purpoſes of that Conjuncture, than that ſubtle-ſeeming Tenderneſs of the Duke: For they

knew

knew His Majesties Love and Confidence in His Royal Brother, was not yet shaken enough; and that to have but named Him among the other Roman Catholicks at that time, had certainly obviated the Kings Royal Assent to that Act.

The Game was then but to extort from the King by force, or gain by surprize, what they might easily convert to the Dukes Disadvantage afterward. For the Test being put upon all bearing Office throughout the Kingdom, for the discovery of the Professors of that Religion, on suspicion and suggestion to the People, that they were all in that Conspiracy; and the Duke being known to be of that Religion, every one knew how to draw the Conclusion, though the Duke were excepted, to please the good King; but especially when Matters were afterward intrigued to that pass, that they dared openly to bring against Him a Bill of Exclusion in the High Court of Parliament, and infaming Him at the same time all over the Kingdom, with Libels of the most black and horrid import, that Craft and Malice together could suggest. Whatever was in the Design, it is manifest enough in the Event, that the first imposing of this Test, and diffusing it through the whole Kingdom, did universally ferment a disgust and prejudice against Him, and cast a Dishonour upon Him, and was a Method and Disposition to the Exclusion-Bill, which followed while He was yet Duke.

But now He is, by the Grace of God, King of *England*, &c. the continuing of the same, and the frequent occasion of using and renewing it, must necessarily continue, renew and fasten in His Subjects Minds, the same preconceived prejudice, which cannot be without Alienation of the Affections of His Liege-People from Him, and consequently not only incumber and make His Government unwieldable in His Hand, but also shrewdly hazard a Dissolution of it; and be a continual Spring of many Evils, against all which, the keeping up of this Test still, and putting that alone into the Ballance, I think must appear to any thinking Man, lighter than Vanity. And yet much more, when this malicious Suggestion against the King and others of His Religion, is by the same Votaries to this Test, for the most part acknowledged to be nothing but Sham and Illusion, Cheat and Villany.

It were to be supposed in generous Equity, that all those who had on that account suffered in their Fortunes and their Honour, their Innocency being cleared, should be also now cleared of the Laws respecting them on that account, and that some other expedient might be excogitated, so to secure us and our Religion, as might not expose innocent Persons to Dishonor and Ruine. How should we expect God should bless it to us, and make us safe by such an unjust security: Unjust, (I say,) and especially to so Great and Sacred a Person as our Prince.

Why do we suffer any thing to remain, which may intimate and insinuate to His Liege People such a false Suggestion, and dishonourable Imputation, and still further impress upon their Minds so odious a Character, as in this *Test*, if not by design, yet by event, is evidently cast upon him.

From what has been said on this Head, First, with respect to that Conspiracy, you see the necessity of the King's asserting His Honour by His Prerogative

gative at this time; seeing we do yet so tenaciously hold our Resolution of retaining such Laws: nevertheless, for the reflections from them, on His Majesties Honour, and the evil consequences of that, upon His Government.

Another reflection on His Majesties Honour, for the preserving of which he is constrained to make use of His Dispensing Power, and particularly against that established Law, called the *Test*, is this; That in the using of it, and so long as it continues, and so often as occation returns, for the iterating of it, His Majesty is inferred, and publiquely marked for an Idolater. Which odious Inference, so perpetually injected into the Minds of the Mobile, it cannot but beget in them an Aversation from His Majesty, and an Alienation of the Affections of His Liege People; making them turbulent, uneasie, and unmanageble by the Government.

You may say, perhaps, we cannot help that; People will think as they list.

It's true, but in the mean time, I think, according to the maxims of Government, it is neither politique, nor decent, that the Laws themselves should set a Brand upon the King, and administer Fuel to their Fire.

Though the People will not be Tongue-ty'd, yet the Laws may, and ought, if, as I said, they will be consistent with themselves, for that were a contradiction, so severely to censure whatever does alienate from the King, the Affections of His Liege People at one time, and yet admit, and encourage it at another; can such Laws Honour the King, as the Scriptures have commanded, which do constrain all Men, before they can be capable of serving His Majesty, aloud, and in open Courts of Justice, every where dispersed over the whole Nation, and with the Sanction of a Sacrament, to declare their abhorrence, and renunciation of certain Doctrines, and Tenets of Religion, by which they do infer His Majesty to be a gross Idolater: which Doctrines they nevertheless know at the same time, as by our King, so by most of the Princes of the Christian World, to be conscientiously owned and professed.

What higher contempt, affront, and dishonour can there be put upon a King by His Subjects? and still higher, That His own Authority shall be forced to justifie, and encourage, and give them only Rewards, and Honors, and Offices for so doing; and to exclude all others, who think it becomes them to be more modest, and in such a matter, to suppress their censure, and keep their Sentiment to themselves. If His Majesty should require of us, with all this Solemnity, to Declare, that we believed the worship of the Host, Invocation of Saints, &c. to be no Idolatry, and that consequently, neither himself, nor any of His Church and Communion, were Idolaters in so doing; what less opposition, and clamour of Popery could we make, than we do now, when His Majesty only desires, that we would take the liberty of Thinking, Discoursing also modestly, what we list ourselves in this matter, so we would not force others to make a publick Declaration of it, and solemnly to Swear to it too, who perhaps, are not so satisfied in the thing, or if they are, think it no good manners to His Majesty, to do it at this time.

The King would not exclude us, but admit all His good Subjects indifferently

rently to His Service, and His Favour ; nay, the very *Roman Catholicks* shall not be capable of the like Places and Offices, but as they shall be bound and disabled from doing any injury to others, or infringing the least Liberty, Advantage, or Honor of Protestants.

But by His Laws, whether He will or no, to constrain Him, to admit no other Persons about Him, none to attend in His Houshold, none to Serve Him in the Ministring of publick Affairs, but such as have taken such Oaths, as imply Him to be an Idolater !

Shall he have no other Objects when ever he lift up His Eyes, or which way soever he look, but such as may stir up in Him a regreting remembrance of the constraint, we put upon Him, and our ill usage of Him ?

These are things not to be endured by Flesh and Blood ; I am confident, no Gentleman in *England* could be content to make it His own case ; nor will they, I hope, when they more nearly look into the thing, and see what evil consequences it is likely to produce, Censure His Majesty for using His Power of Dispensing with such Laws, till a fit time, for the Convention of Parliament ; and that the rather, for that His Majesty Declares His willingness to concur with them there to the establishing any other Law, equivalent in its stead, which without those oblique wipes upon His Majesties Religion, His Honour, and His Conscience, may be as effectual to secure us in the profession of our Religion, as that we enjoy.

And not only His Honour, but his Life also, may be in danger from this Insinuation : There being no small number of zealous Protestants, some of which I have met with, holding Idolatry to be a Crime punishable with Death by Christian Magistrates ; and some worse than that, that every Mans Hand is to be upon them to put them to Death, that their Eye is not to pity or spare so much as an Inticer to Idolatry, though our own Father or Mother, *&c.*

This is said in Vindication of the dispensing Power, His Majesty now uses, as necessary for the Preservation of His Person, His Conscience and his Honour.

And though, as I said, what concerns His Majesties, and the common good are so interwoven, as the publick must have sustained a very great Evil, if not a probable Ruine and Dissolution of the Government, by any Rebellious or violent attempt on His Person, so Naked and Defenceless, as we would have left Him, and that His Majesty by these Measures, saves His Person, His Conscience and His Honour.

Yet, since His Majesty has been pleased in His Declaration, to justifie the exerting of His Prerogative at this time, not only on the account of Himself, but of many other advantages which may thence accrew to His People.

I shall desire you to consider them also, as they stand commended to us in the Declaration it self, and with those further enlargements on that subject, lately published from other Excellent Pens, to which I refer you.

And go on to the next Reason, on the account of which, a Minister of the Church of *England* cannot, according to you, Consent to the Declaration. In which, and the rest that follow, I may be short, for I reckon the business of your Letter is done. If I have cleared, in all wisely constituted Societies, the

Reason

Reaſon and Neceſſity of a Power, diſpenſing with the eſtabliſhed Laws, in ſome extraordinary Caſes, without which, the publick Good, which is the main end of all Laws, and Governments, cannot be ſecured at all times, That ſome body muſt be truſted with this Power. That it is no where wiſer and ſafer lodg'd, than in the King. That therefore we muſt acquieſce in His judgment, when it is ſeaſonable to uſe it; That nevertheleſs, for our ſatisfaction, the Reaſons which His Majeſty has given in that Declaration of His, which we refuſe to Read, are very clear and cogent, for the putting in practice His Prerogative at this time. But you ſay further, We cannot Conſent, nor Read. For that is to recommend to our People the choice of ſuch Perſons, as ſhall take away the *Teſt* and *Penal Laws*, which moſt of the Nobility and Gentry have Declared their Judgment againſt. This is an Argument, not from the force of Reaſon, but Example, which may be right or wrong, as it happens, and we have no way to aſſure us, when it is, and when it is not, but by putting it to the touchſtone of Reaſon; which being done already, till I ſee thoſe Reaſons anſwer'd, I have no more to ſay, but *Magis amica Veritas*. Paſſing this over therefore as nothing new, but only a ſcrape to the Nobility and Gentry; you ſay next, rather than nothing, almoſt the ſame over again, *viz. That it is to condemn all thoſe great and worthy Patriots of their Country, who forfeited the deareſt thing in the world to them, next a good Conſcience, that is, The Favour of their Prince, and a great many Honourable and Profitable imployments with it, rather than conſent to the Propoſal of taking away the* Teſt, and Penal Laws, *which they apprehend deſtructive to the Church of* England, *and the* Proteſtant Religion; *and he who can in Conſcience do all this, I think need ſcruple nothing.* If the ſame Propoſal had been made to us as to the Worthy Patriots, that is, Whether we would give our Votes in Parliament, for taking off the *Teſt* and *Penal Laws*, then you had rightly taken an Argument a ſimili for our ſuffering like them, rather than conſenting, which is the thing you pretend to do, but very inconſiderately, for our Caſe is not like theirs. Nor will the Great and Worthy Patriots Thank you for bringing them to parallel and patronize your Diſobedience to His Majeſties plain Command, when the Conſent they were asked to give, was only to a Propoſal, and ſo can imply no Diſobedience, if they did not conſent. If His Majeſty had asked no more of them than he does of us, which is, to publiſh His Declaration; they would never have forfeited His Majeſties Favour for that, nor their Honourable and profitable Imployments. For how, I pray, came His Majeſties Declaration the firſt time publiſhed; I ſuppoſe it muſt be communicated to others, ſo, as to paſs all over the Nation, through many Hands of Officers, of the Gentry, and of the Nobility too, for any thing you know; and of ſuch, as nevertheleſs did ſtop, perhaps, at the Propoſal of taking off the *Teſt* and *Penal Laws*; and ſo are you left free to do, if you pleaſe, for all your Reading, and as free are all thoſe that hear you.

You proceed next, to the evil conſequences which may follow your Reading; It would make our Miniſtry contemptible, you ſay, which muſt by no means be admitted, right or wrong, for ought I ſee. *A Miniſter muſt look to pleaſe and humour the Mobile, or all his Counſels, Exhortations, Preachings, Writings,*

are nothing worth. For *St. Paul* has ſaid, *Tit.* 2. 15. *Let no man deſpiſe thee:* That is well enough argued againſt Authority, in a matter, where we ſee the People as hot, and as forward as ourſelves.

But now, if we were to Teach the People, as you call it, by Reading the *Act of Uniformity*, the Book of *Homilies*, or the Book of *Common Prayer*, or any thing elſe, not ſo reliſhing; or by which, we are like to get the Ill-will and Contempt of the People: Why, it is but putting on our Noſe of Wax again, with a bent on the other ſide; *then by honour and diſhonour, by good report and evil report, as deceivers and yet true,* 2 Cor. 6. 8. Am I therefore become your enemy, becauſe I tell you the Truth? If your buſineſs were only *ad captandum populum*, this might ſerve; but whereas you wiſh us ſo to behave ourſelves, that no Man deſpiſe us, It will concern us, who are Clergy-men and Scholars, not to appear to all Men of Senſe, ſuch ſilly and deſpicable Animals, as you ſeem to take us for, by thinking to impoſe upon us, with ſuch pitiful Sophiſtry as this: For, Sir, Is the thing evil, or is it not? If it be, as ſometimes you are in the mind, contrary to the Laws both of God and Man, do but prove this as ſoundly to us, as you have ſaid it temerariouſly, and we are as much at a point, for not recommending it to our People, as you, though they ſhould deſpiſe us for it never ſo much. But if it be not evil in itſelf, as, forgetting your Theme, in another place you had almoſt ſlipped out, in theſe words, *It may be it were no fault, to conſent to the Declaration.* If I ſay there be perhaps no fault, but only a popular miſpriſion in it, to make ſome Men deſpiſe us; by the ſame reaſon we ſhould not read the Book of Canons, as we are bound every year, nor an *Homily*, nor the Book of *Common-Prayer* itſelf.

Your next Reaſon is, that it will effectually tend to the ruine of the Church of *England*; And why? *Becauſe it will provoke, or miſguide, all the friends it has; What, the Reading it, and nothing elſe?* A Man had as good be a keeper of Bears, as of ſuch Friends, who will be ſo eaſily provoked. As for the King, no body cares how much he be provoked, though he be moſt able by His Power, and obliged by His Sacred Promiſe, to Protect us from ruine. And if we once diſoblige Him from that, I fear we ſhall find it beyond the Power of the Nobility and Gentry, to protect and maintain us, ſo far as he has ingag'd Himſelf in this, ſo provoking, Declaration; ſuppoſing His Majeſty falſe and treacherous to His Royal Word and Promiſe; you have ſaid ſomthing on this Argument; and truly he who ſhould be over ſolicitous in anſwering it, would but ſeem to be ſo too. Wherefore, you may run for me to the end of your Rope, with the reſt of your harangue on this reaſon. It is all ſet on a falſe bottom; which is Anſwer enough.

Your Objection comes next, of ſome who ſhould ſay, Theſe are Conſequences but conjectural, and not abſolutely neceſſary.

It may be the Reading of it will not ſo effectually tend to the Churches ruine.

To which you Anſwer, They are not indeed ſuch effects in reſpect of certainty, as ariſe from natural Cauſes, but they are as morally certain, as any thing can be. Good Sir, then do us the Favour but to hear them made out, almoſt as evident Demonſtrations as you have promiſed us, let us ſee this Moral Certainty. Moral Effects muſt have Moral Cauſes; Is not the Kings a

Moral

Moral Promiſe, and may not a Moral Certainty be grounded upon that? It ſeems you were before aware of this Retort, and you think fit to grant it, in theſe words which follow, which are by way of Queſtion.

Whether the King cannot keep his Promiſe to the Church of England, *if the Teſt and Penal Laws be repealed?* To which your ſelf make anſwer, *You cannot ſay but this may be*; ſo that you grant as Moral a Certainty on this ſide, as on the other. But the Kings Moral Certainty is not to be believ'd, though yours muſt: But for Reaſons wherefore, you are wont to be ſparing, where the Matter pinches; but if we will take your Word, there are ſome very ſubſtantial ones behind the Curtain.

Wherefore (as you ſay) *the Nation does not think fit to try it, and we commend the great Men who deny it.*

If we will take ſuch Reaſons, as you think fit to make ſhow of at preſent, why here they are: The King is an Immoral Man, and therefore no Moral certainty of what otherwiſe might be poſſible enough in it ſelf: The King profeſſes an Immoral Religion, and he converſes with a ſort of Immoral Men, called *Jeſuits, who can preſently furniſh him with a Salvo, for his inclination, to forget his promiſe to the Church of* England: Is not this to make the matter almoſt as evident a Demonſtration, as you promis'd us? Why, Sir, I confeſs this is a young Phœnix Argument, ſprung out of the Aſhes of that old one ſaid to be of the Earl of *Shaftburies*, which was burnt by the hand of the Common Hangman, *We muſt have a King we can truſt*: And the Nobility and Gentry are called to take notice of it, and to be ſuppoſed they go on the ſame ground; *Nay, the whole Nation do not think fit to try it, you ſay.* And all muſt be thanked, the Nobility and Gentry eſpecially moſt tenderly treated, and their Ears by no means grated with this Declaration, *which may diſcourage, provoke or miſguide them from their oppoſition to the King on this account, and then we are finally ruin'd indeed.*

Now if the Church of *England* can be beholding to you, for furniſhing her Miniſters with an Argument againſt the Kings Declaration, which ſmells ſo rank of the Hangman; I am miſtaken in her, which I am ſure I am not among thoſe who are Iſraelites indeed: Wherefore I think it needleſs to ſpend any more words about it. But having made ſure of the Nobility and Gentry, as you would have us think: Now but a word to the Wiſe, and you have done, and that is to the Diſſenters.

Who (ſay you) *are ſo wiſe and conſidering, as out of our oppoſition to the King on this Propoſal, to ſmell in its ſomething of a perſecuting ſpirit.*

Well, how ſhall the Matter be handled then, that they be not provoked, for there is no Policy in that at this time of the day; however we have provoked them heretofore.

The Diſſenters, (you ſay) *whom we ought not to provoke, will expound our not reading to be the effect of a perſecuting ſpirit.*

Then it ſeems, not reading is teaching too as well as reading; what you will for that. But how ſhall we ſplit the hair between the Nobility and Gentry on the one ſide, and the Diſſenters on the other? If we can draw both to to our ſide, nothing can reſiſt us.

To diſoblige the Nobility and Gentry were more fatal indeed, as you ſay, *than to anger the Diſſenters.*

But they are numerous and rich, there is no parting with them at this time neither, ſome cunning and fineneſs muſt be uſed then to bring over the Diſſenters to the Confederate Army; for God's ſake, what is the meaning of all this Plotting and Projecting, and making Leagues, and Alliances, and muſtering our Forces? Where's the Enemy? May a Man venture to peep his Head over the Wall to ſee this ſame *Hanibal ad portas*; which comes threatning thus with Fire and Fagot, to diſcharge our new Alliance, the Diſſenters, *From all Pains, Penalties, Forfeitures, Impriſonments, by them, or any of them, incurred or forfeited, or which they ſhall, or may at any time hereafter be liable to, by reaſon of their Nonconformity, or the exerciſe of their Religion, and from all Suits, Troubles or Diſturbances for the ſame*; And as for our ſelves, there is no more mercy to be looked for at his hands, than for our Brethren the poor Diſſenters: *For all our Archbiſhops, Biſhops, Clergy, and all other of the Church of* England, *in the firſt place: Alas! they muſt be every Scul of them protected and maintained in the free exerciſe of their Religion, as by Law eſtabliſh'd; and in the full and quiet enjoyment of all their Poſſeſſions, without any moleſtation or diſturbance whatſoever.*

It is time, one would think, to project a way of joyning the Church of *England* and the Diſſenters to keep one another.

For theſe Diſſenters are wiſe and conſidering Men, and they are ſenſible of themſelves, that all this is but *Anguis in Herbâ*, a mere Trap, a Gin, a pitfall. And although they deſire Eaſe and Liberty, they are not willing to have it with ſuch apparent hazard of Church and State. Let them but ſtay their longing a while; for when there is but the firſt opportunity *of ſhewing our inclinations without danger, they will find that we are not ſuch Perſecutors, as we have been repreſented.* Where then, and what has been the danger that no ſuch Inclinations have appeared toward the Diſſenters theſe twenty eight years back? Have not our Proteſtant Princes, as well as this, been always oppos'd in their Inclinations to any ſuch Indulgence: King *Charles* the Second made them a Promiſe of it at *Breda*, he made ſeveral Intimations of that Promiſe in future Parliaments, and how his Honor lay at ſtake; but met with no Inclination in us, unleſs it were, to lay on more lode: And after, when that gracious Prince was fain to breake from us by main force, and upon his own Prerogative iſſue out his promiſed Indulgence; he could have no peace with us again, nor any compliance with him in his other Affairs of State, till we almoſt compelled him to a Revocation.

And yet what manner of Men ſhould the Diſſenters ſee we are towards them, if we had but opportunity.

But now you ſay, there is danger; yes, now we have carried our ſelves ſo, as to apprehend danger to our ſelves, there comes an opportunity for cokeſing the Diſſenters, to help us to turn the danger upon the King; and they muſt be made to believe, they are in the ſaddeſt danger now that ever they were, who in truth were never ſo much out of it for above twenty years paſt, nor in ſuch probability of ſhaking off the fear of any ſuch danger for the future, if they are not ſeduced and infatuated to be unthankful to their gracious King, and wanting to themſelves. Now the reaſon, wherefore I call the Diſſenters to look back upon our Inclinations towards them, is not to cenſure the Wiſdom and

Honor

Honor of those Parliaments, which made such Laws against Dissenters as Matters then stood.

But to shew, that His present Majesties Religion, which has been as severe towards Dissenters as ours, may nevertheless for that be as sincere as we can be, in the Inclinations he hints the Dissenters may hope from us when time serves: I like your Commendations of the Church of *England* every where well enough, and believe their well meaning, but not as you make use of it, slily to insinuate a distrust and a snare, and to create a suspicion in the Dissenters of His Majesties Veracity and Honour, and by this base Suggestion tempt them to desert Him in this Juncture, and adhere rather to those who oppose Him: I believe as much as you, that they are so wise and considering as to be sensible of a snare, and as likely of your setting for them, as of His Majesties. And that they will think it more wise and safe to confide in His Word, than in yours; and to take the Opportunity which now presents, than to stay and starve while your Grass grows.

But lest your Promises should not prevail, you attempt also by Threatnings to deter them from strengthning His Majesties Party and Design. *Should they take it in this way*, you tell them, *they will find it the dearest Liberty that ever was granted.*

I do not deny, but Gold may be bought too dear; let us see, what we have by the Bargain of parting with our Test and Penal Laws. If all the Discourse of your Letter had been against those only, who are for delivering up our Laws into the Hand of another Religion, without any effectual security for our own; I should have agreed with you, that we cannot Consent but must Suffer in this way, and it is plain His Majesty is of that mind too, His whole Declaration being a Proposal of Terms and Compremise of Peace among His Subjects, of whatever different Persuasions, that none may hinder one another of the Free Exercise of their Religion, and full and quiet enjoyment of their Property, and if you are so suspicious of Sinister dealing, from His Majesty, he offers to make our selves, by our Representatives in Parliament, Umpire in the business, So that your Insinuation seems Ungenteel and Rude towards His Majesty, and savors more of a piquing ill-natur'd jealousie, than any just fear that we should find the Liberty now offered, the dearest that ever was Granted: These are the Reasons, on which you ground your Magisterial Supposition; That no Minister of the Church of *England* can Consent to the Declaration, and therefore cannot read it; how weak and insufficient they are to establish such an Hypothesis, and that therefore all you have built upon it, must come down with it, let the world judge, so that nevertheless for your Arguments, a Minister of the Church of *England* can Consent to the Declaration, and then I think, that he may Read it, no body will deny.

Nay, and that he ought, *in omnibus licitis & honestis*, to pay an active Obedience.

To answer the Command by a Passive Obedience, *To suffer all that can be suffered in this World*, (as you somewhere say) *to be subject only and not resist, will not serve the turn here.*

The

The giving our Body to be burnt, in this Cause, will not make us Martyrs. There is an Active Obedience due to all the King's Honest and Lawful Commands, by the Fundamental Laws of this Kingdom, though the matter of the Command be not yet entred by a Parliamentary Law, for that is but accidental; we owe him much upon the account of our natural Allegiance, founded in that Relation between King and Subject. If it be a Matter in which he is necessitated to use his Prerogative, all that we are bound to satisfie our selves in, is this; Is it a Moral Command? Is it not against the Laws of God, over which he has no Power of Dispensing, though it were to save His own, and the Lives of all His Subjects? If not, we are bound to it by our Natural Allegiance, by our Loyalty or Legality, which is not to be understood so *ad Legem*, as it is not due for Conscience-sake; save only in such Instances where it is pass'd into a Parliamentary Law. For Allegiance reaches to Law in a further Extent and Latitude than so, even to that Law, which Nature and right Reason teach, is founded in such a Relation as King and Subject, and Political Father and Sons. Not only confined to that Law, which defends the Right, the Liberty and Property of the Subject, which is for the most part written because it passes by Grant, and stands on Record, from the King: But to that Prerogative Law also, which is natural and unwritten, and cannot be granted away, because it defends the Rights of the Crown, and defends the Majesty Authority and Dignity of the Prince, and the Capacity, whereby he may perform all the Offices of a Father to his People.

Do not we swear a Canonical Obedience to our Bishops, *In omnibus Licitis & Honestis*? By what Law of the Land is this required? By no Parliamentary Law, but, as I said, by the Law of Nature, rooted in that Relation he bears toward us of our Spiritual Father. But here is no place for a Discourse so large and copious, as it should be, on this Subject. All I mean by it here is this, That if the Matter of the Declaration be Moral, Honest, and Lawful, so far as Lawful takes in the Law of the King's Prerogative, as well as the Peoples Laws: We must pay an Active Obedience to this Command of His Majesty, on the account of our Natural Allegiance: A Suffering for it rather, and not resisting only, will not justifie us to God, by whom Kings Reign, and whose Power is Ordained of God. This I take to have been all along the Doctrine of the Church of *England*.

But after all this, it is possible, some of the Ministers of the Church of *England* cannot consent. Some will not take the pains perhaps, and some have not the parts to think deep enough. Some, like Trees, stand their Ground where they were first set, rooted by Education, and some as much by Prejudice. Some have their Reason overpoured, by their Fears; and some, by their Interests. What then? May they not read the Declaration? Must the grand and important Affairs of State be all at a stand, till such Persons can be satisfied? Must their Wills be the Law in the mean time, and their Judgment the Standard of the King and Council, and the whole Nation? Must their Declaration in this Matter be published in all their Churches and Chapels, and His Majesty's never suffered to come in at the Church-door? Why may not both Tales be told, and both Sides heard? This is not just nor civil dealing with His Majesty.

Again, What if you cannot give an internal Consent, or a Consent of Approbation? Can you not read it with a Consent of Acquiescence and Submission? That is all which need to be in a Subject, to Matters of this kind. When the King, in whose Prerogative it is to make Peace and War, sets forth a Declaration, signifying His purpose of making War, suppose with the Dutch or French; May His Officers, in the several Places where this Declaration is to be published, suppress it, and refuse to obey His Command, unless, according to you, they can approve the Matter of it, and be satisfied in the King's Reasons and Grounds of the War? I see not, but, upon your Doctrine, there is more Reason for it here, than where you would instigate us of the Clergy to give so dangerous and pernicious a precedent to the whole Nation.

A Consent of Acquiescence and Submission, as I said, to the Wisdom and Justice of the King, is enough in such Cases, and with no more than that, Armies of their Subjects do follow our Princes into the Field, with the expence of their Blood and Treasure, and not stand bogling, as you would have us, at nothing but Reading or Publishing His Majesties Declaration. On this Principle it will be hard for His Majesty, on whatever just and necessary occasion, to raise an Army among Disciples of your teaching; Nay, it is a wonder, if suffered to proceed, that it does not disband that He has. There is rarely a Concurrence of all Judgments and Votes to the making of the Laws themselves in Parliament, and so not such a Consent as we call internal. Nevertheless an external, or if you will, call it a permissive, Consent, of all, to the Enacting and Publishing it as a Law. Now suppose any of the Members of such a Parliament, giving the Charge at an Assize or Sessions, in the Office of one of His Majesties Judges, or Justices of the Peace; must he pass over, and omit the recital or reading of such Laws, as he does not, in his own Judgment, approve, or to which he had before refused his consent and suffrage in Parliament? Many of those Breves, or Letters Patents, in the behalf of poor distressed Sufferers, to which we are required to excite the Peoples Charity, I have heard accounted by Clergy-Men little better than Cheats, and yet make no scruple of reading them, and that with a whatsoever Law, Statute, or Provision to the contrary notwithstanding. Innumerable Instances of this kind might be offered, if there were need, to shew, that he, who cannot consent to the Declaration with a Consent of Approbation, may yet read it with a Consent of Acquiescence and Submission.

And further, what if you cannot Consent to the matter of the Declaration, or the Expediency of it, in it self; can you not Consent to Read it, in the nature of a Proposal. Not as common Cryers altogether, but yet as Men, whom our Ordinaries, as well as the King, do make use of to these purposes: His Majesty would have us signifie His Pleasure, that he would Treat with His People, by their Representatives in Parliament, concerning the necessity of His Suspension of the Penal Laws at present; and about certain Overtures of Terms and Conditions offered in Exchange, for the Repeal of them for the future: All this is but by way of Proposal, Conditions and Terms offered, and all the way with a reserve to the Parliament. No absolute Consent is required, but only conditional, if such propositions be liked or can be made practicable.

What if it be proposed, to take of the Test and Penal Established Laws? What is there in this contrary to the Laws of the Land? as you frequently, but rashly, suggest. Is the Repeal of a Law against, and not rather agreeable to, the known Laws of the Land? As to the method, which the King uses to this purpose, what can be objected against our Consenting to that? If any Nobleman or Gentleman design the Repeal of a former Established Law, his Method for the compassing his end, must be by making known his Mind and his Reasons: Ordinarily Books are Printed and Published all over the Nation, to this purpose before the Convention of Parliaments, what does the King more in this matter than other Men? And so for Recommending by us to the People, such Persons to sit in Parliament, as may comply with His Majesty in the business of the Declaration: What is it more than Proposal? And what is it more than we ordinarily do for the Nobility and Gentry at their Request. Do not Letters fly about, and Horse and Man, all over the Country, Night and Day, for the Election of such Persons, as are by one or other Recommended to us. This His Majesty desires us to signifie by His Declaration, but yet leaves us free after all. And what is the matter now, we cannot declare to the People these and others His Majesties Proposals? We nor they are ever the more compelled or interpreted to comply with them.

Again, What if we cannot fully consent? Are there not many things done by us, both for our selves and others, but with an half, or a doubting Consent? Do we not perform many Commands of our Parents, of which we are not so fully satisfied, sometimes

times for their Expediency, and sometimes perhaps for their Lawfulness? And are not indeed almost all the Consents of Men in their Converses and Negotiations one with other of this kind? Does the reading this Declaration ingage us in an evil and unlawful Action, as necessarily as your Simile of Fire burning Wood? Have we no Reason of the least doubt in this Matter? Have we robbed the Bishop of *Rome* of all his Infallibility? If there be, as I believe with the most there is, something of doubt in the other Balance, then that is a good Rule which heretofore we used to commend to the Dissenters in the business of Conformity: It is good to doubt on the best side; Let us fear we sin against God, by disobeying our King. That we are to obey the King *in omnibus licitis & honestis*, is out of all doubt: Whether this Command of His be altogether unlawful, is not so certain. Away then with your Obedience, where you see you may be most certain: This was after our own Measures I am sure once, if we have taken no false Measures since.

And further, If we cannot serve His Majesty in this, with so intire a Consent as we wish we could; Can we do nothing of Civility, of Honour and Respect? Does not this move us sometimes to strain a little out of our Byass? If this Declaration had been a Speech of my Lord *Russel's*, or a Letter of Dr. *Burnet's*, we had been so kind to make them as publick as we could. Some of us remember the Ordinances of the Black Parliament, and the Proclamations of an Usurping *Oliver*, and how (though I believe somewhat against our minds) a little slavish fear made us buckle to the reading them in our Churches, and to give Thanks, and fast as demurely as the best of them.

But it seems neither Love nor Fear can prevail with us, in the behalf of His Majesty. If it were but to have expiated and retriv'd that Sin and Folly of our Ingratitude, when we, like Blocks, lay unmoved without the least sense of His Majesties more particular favour to us, and when an universal ferment of Joy and Thanks transfused it self over the whole Nation, but our singular selves. A stupidity, in which your Letter would tempt us to be hardned more and more. This, say you, must have served in stead of an Address of Thanks, which the Clergy generally refused, though it was only to Thank the King for His Gracious promise, renewed to the Church of *England*, in his Declaration, which was much more innocent, than to publish the Declaration it self in our Churches. I remember one of the famous *Oxford* Reasons, why the Clergy should not Address, was, that it would be but I thank you for nothing; and that His Majesties promise was but a Superogation, over those Establisht Laws, which had done more for our Protection and Security already, than he could add.

Now I thought it would have becomed wise Men, however happy at present, to remember how fickle and various Fortune uses to be: Who knows what back Friends the Church of *England* may have in future Parliaments, as likely as heretofore in their most Halcyon Days, and how much we may have occasion to be beholding to a *Le Roy avisera*, to obviate their Attempts. But this I conceive was not thought of in the Thanking Days, when our Manners to our King was much of that Cynick sort as of *Diogenes* to *Alexander*, *Pray, Sir, stand out of our Sun, and don't hinder us of that you cannot give us.*

Well, Sir, you for your part, in stead of mending one Hole, are like to make two; You are for no Address of Thanks, nor any thing like it: Wherefore I pray God deliver the Church of *England* from falling into the Hands of such Botchers.

For my part, I would advise them yet to Address to His Majesty, acknowledging their Errour, beg His Pardon, trust in His promise and give him assurance, they are ready to Read His Declaration whenever He please to Command them.

I should not give this Counsel, if I were not their Friend, and, Sir, *Yours*

FINIS.